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## A COUNTRY SABBATH.

Now soars the lark in heaven's eyes ;  
Through leafy crypt now steals the stream,  
With shallow dimple, sword-blade gleam,  
And glimpses of divine surprise.

Heaven's golden fire and air of blue  
Are drooped about the bowery world ;  
Within her holy bosom furled  
The sun has drunk the rose's dew.

The landscape all around is fair,  
But this remains the heart and gem ;  
With stealing stream, and graceful stem,  
And sunlit park, and sweet parterre.

The vista fascinates my gaze ;  
I linger in a blessed trance,  
See in a dream the waters glance,  
And things that are the food of praise.

In many an English cottage round  
Japonica, a glory, glows ;  
Her ruby-coloured sister blows ;  
And purple pansies gem the ground.

The first laburnum droops her curls,  
And mingles with the lilac's locks ;  
O'er golden meadows browse the flocks ;  
The orchard-blossom types sweet girls.

The sweet-briar sheds its heavenly breath ;  
I pass the wallflower's rich perfume ;  
And chestnut with its tint-freaked plume :  
O world to banish dreams of death !

The scent of flower, the song of bird,  
The lace of leaf, the light of heaven,  
Are vital with a mystic leaven  
We have a soul for, not a word :

Unless it be — the Breath of God ;  
Which also breathes in yon church-bell ;  
It breaks on me with what a spell  
Across the May-embroidered sod !

Earth, clothed with Sabbath, thou art fair !  
Ye two upon each other act !  
The Sabbath steeps the flowery tract,  
And finer seems to make the air.

Chambers' Journal.

## SONG.

SING the old song, amid the sounds dispersing  
The burden treasured in your hearts too long ;  
Sing it with voice low-breathed, but never  
name her ;  
She will not hear you, in her turrets nursing  
High thoughts, too high to mate with mortal  
song :

Bend o'er her, gentle Heaven, but do not  
claim her !

In twilight caves and secret loveliness

She shades the bloom of her unearthly days ;

The forest winds alone approach to woo her ;  
Far off we catch the dark gleam of her tresses,  
And wild-birds haunt the wood-walks where  
she strays,

Intelligible music warbling to her.

The Spirit charged to follow and defend her,

He also, doubtless, suffers this love-pain,

And she perhaps is sad, hearing his sighing ;

And yet that face is not so sad as tender ;

Like some sweet singer's, when her sweetest  
strain

From the heaved heart is gradually dying.

AUBREY DE VERE.

## THE SEA.

UNCHANGED, unchangeable old friend, I come  
Back to thy welcome — back, as to a home.

All else has failed me in my hour of sorrow ;  
Nature has naught that wayward grief can  
borrow.

Sweet flowers have thorns, and wither in my  
hand ;

Alone, mid sweeping glades and hills, I stand.

The river, dancing on its sunny way,

Has little to my yearning heart to say ;

Bright birds sing on, sing on, in jarring nuth —

Such woe as mine shrinks back from happy  
earth.

Unchanged, unchangeable, thy mighty roar  
Thunders, as ever, on the rocky shore.

Thy solemn beauty, thy eternal motion,

Are pure and grand and true, majestic ocean,

As when we stood in fearless joy together,

And watched thee sparkling in the golden  
weather.

Now, in the winter of the year and heart,

Old friend, I come ; I own thee as thou art,

Unchanged, unchangeable, O glorious sea,

Comforter, teacher, help, and strength to me.

Tinsley's Magazine.

## TO AN INFANT.

FAMILIAR spirit, that so graciously

Dost take whatever fortune may befall,

Trusting thy fragile form to the arms of all,

And never counting it indignity

To be caressed upon the humblest knee ;

Thou, having yet no words, aloud dost call

Upon our hearts ; the fever and the gall

Of our dark bosoms are repressed in thee.

From selfish fears and lawless wishes free,

Thou hast no painful feeling of thy weakness ;

From shafts malign and pride's base agony

Protected by the pillows of thy meekness ;

Thou hast thy little loves which do not grieve  
thee,

Unquiet make thee, or unhappy leave thee.

AUBREY DE VERE.

From The British Quarterly Review.  
THE BALLAD: ITS NATURE AND  
LITERARY AFFINITIES.\*

THE name *Ballad* was long ago divorced from the thing which it originally designated. No one now associates with the word the idea of a *dance-song*, which radically belongs to it. In its congeners *ballet* and *ball*, the primary idea of dancing is still preserved. But, as in the case of treaties of peace, rival claims seem to have been settled here on the principle of mutual concession. The ballad has resigned the dancing to the ballet and the ball; and they, in exchange, have abandoned the singing to the ballad. The combination of singing and dancing is, of course, perfectly natural. It is as natural that exuberant feeling should be expressed by rhythmical movements of the whole body as by rhythmical movements of its most expressive organ — the voice. Perhaps it is most reasonable of all that the two modes of motion should harmoniously combine.

In fact, this union is found pervading the primitive entertainments of most nations. The wild "whoop" of the Indian in his war dance, and the "haloo" of the Scottish Highlander in the mad whirl of his reel, are alike inarticulate ballads, expressing in the one case savage triumph, in the other exuberant mirth. One traveller describes to us the simple custom of the Faroëse, who "recreate themselves with a plain dance, holding one another by the hand, and singing the while some old champion's ballad." Another tells us how his peaceful arrival on one of the South Sea Islands was celebrated by an extempore lay, which had for its rhythmical accompaniment the dancing and merry-making of the children who per-

formed it. But it is in connection with primitive religious services that the union of singing and dancing is most strikingly illustrated, and that chiefly among Eastern nations, from the days of Miriam and David to those of the Greek dithyrambic chorus, and from the Greek chorus to the Moslem dervishes and Egyptian almë and Indian bayaderes of our own time.

This is in itself a deeply interesting subject, but we refer to it now merely for the purpose of pointing out how widely the term with which we are dealing has departed from its original application. For the ballad long ago reserved itself to designate a particular department of literature, using language, spoken or written, as the only medium through which its thoughts are expressed.

But, even in its literary application, great liberties have been taken with the term. It has been applied, even in the same age, to works of the most diverse character. In England this confusion reached its climax in the sixteenth century, when the names *book* and *ballet* appear to have been used indifferently for nearly every kind of literary product, whether in prose or in verse. A long poem in "The Mirrour for Magistrates," entitled "The Murninge of Edward, Duke of Buckingham" (apparently a popular epitome of Sackville's famous "Complaint"), is called a ballad. About the same time there appeared a versified history taken from the "Romance of Alexander;" that, also, is called a ballad. Sometimes a ballad is a work wholly written in prose; sometimes it is a play, or an interlude. Many ballads are religious works, for in 1561 there was published "A new Ballet of Four of the Commandments," and a few years later we have a ballad on "The Seventeenth Chapter of Genesis." John Hall's "Courte of Vertue" (1564) contains "Holy and spiritual songs, sonnets, psalms, *balllets*, and short sentences, as well of holy scripture as others." Again, some of Skelton's poems are called "Satirical Ballads;" and a famous poem written in defence of the Reformation doctrines is called "The Ballad of Luther, the Pope,

\* (1.) *Scottish Ballads and Songs, Historical and Traditional*. Edited by JAMES MAIDMENT. Two vols. 1868.

(2.) *The Ballads of Scotland*. Edited by WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN, D.C.L. 1858.

(3.) *The Romantic Scottish Ballads, their Epoch and Authorship*. By ROBERT CHAMBERS, F.R.S.E., &c. 1859.

(4.) *The Romantic Scottish Ballads and the Lady Wardlaw Heresy*. By NORVAL CLYNE. 1859.

(5.) *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. By THOMAS PERCY, Lord Bishop of Dromore. 1765.

(6.) *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. Collected by SIR WALTER SCOTT, Baronet. 1802.

a Cardinal, and a Husbandman" (1550). Long before this, John Gower had presented fifty MS. French sonnets to Henry IV.: they were called, and are still known as, the "Cinquante Ballades." Eighty years later we find Caxton applying the designation "the Ballad Royal" to the measure in which Benedict Brough translated Cato's "Morals." In more recent times we have Warton characterizing as a "celebrated ballad" the satirical medley of James V. of Scotland, entitled "Christ's Kirk on the Green." This laxity has descended to our own day, for we still apply the term "ballad" indiscriminately to lays and legends, to romances and rhapsodies, to love lyrics and sentimental songs, and, with least propriety of all, to those weakest of all weak productions, the nondescript ballads of the modern concert room.

It were rash to conclude that this confusion is the result of ignorance or caprice. It is due mainly to the altered conditions under which, at different stages in the history of thought and of civilization, the same kind of literary work, or literature with the same end and aim, is produced. There is a certain method underlying the madness or licence which appears on the surface. The common bond which unites and harmonizes these widely diverse literary products is, that they all appealed, though in different ways, to the prevailing popular sentiment of their time. At one time this sentiment might be most easily reached through the medium of prose; at another time through that of verse: at one time by means of simple narrative; at another time by means of reflection and satire. In one age the sentiment connected itself with civil and social affairs, in another with ecclesiastical and religious politics. But in every case the literary instrument employed to quicken the popular enthusiasm is called a ballad. Add now to this limitation of the term to popular literature its further restriction to poetry, and we shall approach very near to the modern application of the word. For there is a special branch of our poetical literature to which by common consent the name ballad expressly belongs —

works possessing a character as distinct as the metrical romances or the rhyming chronicles, as the old dramatists or the Lake poets.

If, then, equally discarding ancient distortions and modern imitations, we examine with care that very considerable body of our poetical literature, on which under the familiar name of "our ballads" we not unreasonably pride ourselves, we shall find that it possesses three main distinguishing characteristics. These poems are *narrative* in substance; they are *lyrical* in form, and they are *traditional* in origin.

*First*, the true ballad is a *narrative* poem. It tells a connected story. It has a beginning, a middle, and an end. It deals with stirring events or touching incidents. It appeals to the popular ear, and goes directly to the popular heart. It commemorates the achievements of great warriors or of national heroes. Its end was both historical and practical, and practical in being historical. For it was the express aim of the ballad not merely to interest and amuse the people to whom it was addressed, not merely to express the popular estimate of the heroes whose triumph it celebrates, but also, and very specially, to hold up these heroes as examples to be followed, and to inspire the auditors with a laudable ambition to emulate their deeds of prowess, and so to stimulate popular enthusiasm and national spirit in rude times. Sir Philip Sidney well describes the effect of such recitals in kindling the heroic spirit when he says, "I never heard the old song of Percie and Douglas that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet."

The narrative ballad thus presents us with heroes and heroines, with lords and ladies, with fairies and demigods,—for these were credulous times,—or with plain men and women of the work-a-day world, in whose fate, as in that of the characters of a play, we feel the most absorbing interest.

But, in order to mark off the ballad from other narrative poems,—from poetical romances, rhyming chronicles, and epics of the greater sort,—we must add that the ballad limits its subject to a sin-



gle incident. It is *simple* in its plan and action, not *complex*. It tells a connected story, but only one story, not an interwoven series of stories, whence it follows that the incident which it narrates must possess in itself enough of interest and body to enable it to stand by itself as the sole subject of a complete poem.

*Secondly*, the true ballad is a *lyrical* poem. It was originally composed with the special view, not of being read or studied in private, but of being recited, chanted, or sung before an audience more or less public. Of course, in determining the nature of the ballad, the lyrical feature must be taken in connection with the other features mentioned, that is to say, while every true ballad is a lyric, it does not follow that every lyric is a ballad.

The lyrical character of the ballad was no accidental or artificial charm added to it to set it off to greater advantage. It was an essential condition of its existence in the circumstances of its publication. For ballads are originally the literary products of a primitive and unlettered race. They are, in a very true sense, the nursery rhymes of a people. In the nation, as in the individual, the opening and unsophisticated mind of childhood delights in incidents and adventures; and it takes the greatest delight in these when they are narrated in the metrical form. It lisps in numbers, because numbers most naturally and fitly come. For the old ballads were not at first written down. The likelihood is that their authors could not write, and that their auditors could not have read the ballads if they had been written. They were, therefore, composed in the head, and committed to memory verse by verse as they were composed; and they were perused, in the first instance, and probably for generations afterwards, through the ear alone. A lyrical form, therefore, would be an immense convenience both to the performers and to the audience. Add to this that it was the aim of such primitive productions, not merely to afford entertainment, but also, and indeed chiefly, to stir and keep alive a sentiment of heroism; and we cannot fail to see that the lyrical form was not

only a convenience, but a means of greatly enhancing the influence of the ballad minstrels.

Though these minstrels and their calling latterly fell into disrepute, they have weighty claims upon our respect and gratitude. They were long the only custodiers of our popular literature. We are indebted to them also for many of those simple and primitive melodies which form the foundation of our national music, both sacred and profane. Before literature became a separate and recognized calling, they were the professional authors of their day and generation. When books and newspapers were yet unknown, they furnished the "abstract and brief chronicle" of their time. Before schools were planted, or schoolmasters were abroad, they diffused, not only news, but intelligence in the higher sense, and were, even more than the clergy, the true educators of the people.

The minstrels were for long esteemed and rewarded according to their deserts. As they made their periodical circuits of the country, they were received, in castle as in hamlet, with hearty welcome. No picture of mediæval life is more interesting, or more thoroughly characteristic of the time, than that in which we see the lords and ladies of the castle, with their retainers and faithful hounds, gathered at the close of the day round some wandering bard in the great baronial hall, while he, sweeping the chords of his harp, pours forth his stream of melody, — now swelling into a tide of triumph as he celebrates deeds of derring-do, now sinking into soft and tender cadences, while he recounts some tale of thrilling pathos, or of ill-requited love.

But many a great house had its own special minstrel, as an indispensable and well-paid member of the establishment. Indeed, one of the chief entertainments of the Norman barons was to listen to the romantic and martial adventures of their ancestors, recited by their paid minstrel. It seems to have been a special perquisite of those baronial minstrels, that they were allowed to travel to neighbouring monasteries and "assist" at their profane entertainments. On such occa-

sions their services were not only more highly esteemed than those of the clergy by the general public, who usually preferred amusement to instruction, but they were sometimes better remunerated by the clerical directors of the entertainments themselves. Of this, Warton mentions some curious instances:

In the year 1430, at the annual feast of the fraternity of the HOLIE CROSSE at Abingdon, a town in Berkshire, twelve priests each received *fourpence* for singing a dirge; and the same number of minstrels were rewarded each with *two shillings and fourpence*, beside diet and horsemeat. Some of these minstrels came only from Maydenhithe, or Maidenhead, a town at no great distance in the same county. In the year 1441, eight priests were hired from Coventry to assist in celebrating a yearly *obit* in the church of the neighbouring priory of Maxtoke; as were six minstrels, called *MIMI*, belonging to the family of Lord Clinton, who lived in the adjoining castle of Maxtoke, to sing, harp, and play, in the hall of the monastery, during the extraordinary refecton allowed to the monks on that anniversary. *Two shillings* were given to the priests, and *four* to the minstrels; and the latter are said to have supped in *camera picta*, or the painted chamber of the convent, with the sub-prior, on which occasion the chamberlain furnished eight massy tapers of wax.\*

The custom of having minstrels attached to noble houses, such as that of Lord Clinton, was common amongst the Norman barons, whose retainers included several singers and harpers, just as pipers to this day have their recognized place in the household of a Highland chieftain.

But the reference to the Maidenhead minstrels who performed at Abingdon reminds us that in those times every considerable town had its complement of singers, harpers, tale-tellers, and fiddlers, supported out of its revenues. What were the ordinary or regular entertainments in which they took part, we do not precisely know; but the services which they rendered on great occasions are often minutely recorded. "It seems," says Tytler, "to have been a custom in Scotland, as old at least as Alexander III., that when the sovereign made his progress through the country, minstrels and singers received him on his entrance into the towns, and accompanied him when he took his departure; and we find Edward I., in his triumphal journey through the land in 1296, paying certain sums of money as a remuneration for the same melodious reception."

But most highly favoured of all were the minstrels attached to the court, both in England and in Scotland. In the Burgh Records of Scotland, quoted by Professor Aytoun, no entry is so common as that of payments to *singers* and *lutors*, "at the king's commande." These records afford unequivocal proof of the high estimation in which traditional poetry and the performance of the minstrels were held in early times. But no circumstance attested by them is more gratifying than the fact that Blind Harry, the chronicler of the deeds of Wallace, "who must then," as Aytoun says, "have been in extreme old age, was a regular stipendiary of the gallant and accomplished king, who fell in the midst of his chivalry, at Flodden." "Whether Bruce himself," says Tytler, "was a proficient in music, the favourite accomplishment of many a knight in those days, is not known, but he undoubtedly kept his minstrels."

At the English court, the institution of minstrelsy was still more liberally maintained. Henry III. had not only his royal minstrel or *joculator*, and his harper, but he had also in his train a French poet called *Henry the Versifier*, to whom, on several occasions, the salary of one hundred shillings a-year was paid. Then we all know the story of Robert Baston, a minstrel whom Edward II. took with him to Scotland, to sing his triumph over Bruce, but who had the misfortune to be taken prisoner at Bannockburn, when, for his ransom, he was compelled, Balaam-like, to bless those whom he had come to curse. Richard I., himself a noted troubadour, had several French minstrels in his pay, of whom tradition gives the foremost place to Blondell, whose voice and harp are said to have enchanted his royal master out of prison.

Both the universities and the monasteries were, for a time at least, amongst the patrons of minstrelsy. In the fourteenth century we find William of Wykeham enjoining the scholars both of New College, Oxford, and of Winchester, to amuse themselves on festival days with songs and recitations of chronicles, — with *cantilinea*, *poëmata*, *regnum chronica*, and the *mirabilia mundi*, — the last a collection of legends brought by the crusaders from the East, and afterwards worked up into the *Merveilles du monde*. It seems certain that many of the rhymes which the professional minstrels hawked about the country, were the production of

\* Warton's "History of English Poetry, from the Eleventh to the Seventeenth Century," section xxiv.

monks in their leisure hours. Monastic libraries abounded in romantic rhymes. "Guy of Warwick" was written by Walter of Exeter, a monk; why not, then, many of the lesser rhymes? A friar in "The Vision concerning Piers the Plowman" is said to be much better acquainted with the "Rimes of Robin Hood" and "Randal of Chester," than with his Paternoster.

But in course of time a change came over the spirit of the clerical dream. The clergy grew to be jealous of the popularity of the minstrels, and of the influence which they exercised over the people. And unfortunately the Church had good reason for putting their rivals under the ban; for the latter yielded only too readily to the temptations to which they were exposed. They were so often associated with scenes of riot and excess, that it was not difficult to attribute such scenes to the influence of their performances. Accordingly the minstrels became identified with revelry and dissipation. Their calling fell into disrepute. They sank lower and lower in the social scale. The noble *scôp* (shaper) and *mâker* degenerated into the mirth-causing gleeman and buffoon. The romantic *jongleur* gave place to the handicraft juggler, pure and simple. And at last, in Queen Mary's time, when books as well as readers became more common, they were by Act of Parliament subjected to the same penalties as "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars."

It is sad to leave in such company the grand old minstrels, whose career as a class is encrusted with so many fine poetical and historical associations. But this great change should not make us forget the important services which, in their palmier days, they rendered both to national literature and to national music. It were certainly an injustice to their memory were we to forget that to their labours we are chiefly indebted for the perfecting of the lyrical element which is an essential one in the definition of ballad poetry.

Thirdly, the *traditionary* element in ballad literature—the fact that these poems must have floated about for years, sometimes for generations, before they were fixed down by the strict laws of literary form—is the feature which marks off the ballad most distinctly from all other forms of poetry. To this circumstance we owe that simplicity of thought which indeed was a necessary condition of the existence of works which lived only

in the memory, and which were perused only by the ear. Their forcible plainness and directness of language are due to the same cause. Thence, also, they derived their representative character; for the true ballad was less the expression of the feelings of the individual poet, than it was the natural outcome of the life and thought of the people, blossoming in song. This is the secret, too, of the educative power of the ballads. For long they were the only means of intellectual culture which the mass of the people enjoyed. The minstrels were their teachers. They stored their memories, they trained their minds, they moulded their spirits, and discharged a function which, in Scotland at least, has been performed in later times by the pulpit and the press. And this is, no doubt, what the "very wise" friend of Fletcher of Saltoun meant when he said, in the trite words generally attributed to Saltoun himself—"if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."

Such being the true nature of the ballad—narrative, lyrical, and traditionary—it is not wonderful that its origin and early history should themselves be matters of tradition and inference, rather than of well-ascertained fact. Yet it cannot be doubted that the ballad has exercised an important influence on the development, not only of national poetry, but of national literature in all its great departments—excepting, of course, that of speculation and abstract thought.

In the first place, the ballad is the true spring-head of *history*. It is an acknowledged fact that the earliest national literature of all countries has been some kind of ballad poetry. It is reasonable, in the nature of things, that it should have been so. There is, indeed, no fact which modern research and philosophic criticism have more satisfactorily established than this,—that the streams of authentic history, when traced far enough, have their source in remote uplands, where the head-waters are lost in wildering mazes of tradition and romance. This is now so well understood, and so generally acknowledged, that its statement is a mere commonplace of criticism. In connection with the early history of Rome, this view, promulgated in the last century by Perizonius, and elaborated more recently by Niebuhr, Thirlwall, Malden, Arnold, and Mommsen, has been thoroughly popularized by Macaulay in his vivid *lays*, which are

simply conjectural ballads,—examples in modern dress of the kind of stories which enter so largely into the woof of Livy's narrative.

But the same thing which is true of the early history of the nations of antiquity is demonstrably true of the great nations of modern Europe,—of England and Germany, as well as of France and Spain. The metrical chronicles, often fabulous and incredible, in which their history has its springs, abound in romantic incidents, for which their writers do not hesitate to avow their indebtedness to traditionary and popular songs. From the chronicles, these legends have been transferred bodily to the pages of such accepted modern historians as Hume; so that historical critics are forced, for example, to deal with many passages in the early, ay, and even in the later history of England, much as Niebuhr dealt with the early history of Rome. There is no doubt great temptation to carry this historical scepticism too far—a temptation which critics of the iconoclastic school find it hard to resist. Yet, when every allowance has been made, many of the most romantic characters and scenes in the early history of Europe must, with however much regret, be given up as either wholly or partially mythical. But if this be so, it may be said that the traditionary element has only vitiated history, by introducing matter which has distorted its aspect and polluted its stream. True to some extent in the lower and literal sense; very far from true in the higher spirit. For these elements, even when their fictitious character has been most clearly demonstrated, have a historical value of their own. Particular facts may be questionable, details may be exaggerated; but the broad picture is, no doubt, essentially true. Moreover, these traditions *were* history to the people who accepted and cherished them,—all the history they had. If they were regarded in no other light than as an embodiment of primitive feelings and beliefs, as a confession of the historical faith of rude times, they would be invaluable to the student of human nature and human thought. Even the scientific historian, therefore, may no more ignore traditionary ballads than the geologist may ignore the moraines and erratic boulders which testify to the existence and operation of powerful agencies which were at work in prehistoric times.

The relations of *the Drama* to ballad poetry are quite as distinctly marked as

those of history. We do not refer merely to the well-known fact of certain great plays—such as “King Lear” and “The Merchant of Venice”—being so far indebted to earlier ballads for their plot or story; or to such confessions as that of Æschylos (important though they be) that his dramas were but scraps from the great feast of Homer. We refer to the drama as a distinct institution, regarded both as a public performance and as a department of poetry.

Now it is plain that whenever dialogue was introduced into the ballads, and when the minstrels, in reciting them, set them off by mimicry and action, so as to give individuality to the characters of the story, the whole performance became a drama in miniature. And this is precisely what the Greek drama was in its earliest stage. Both comedy and tragedy had a distinctly lyrical origin, in the services connected with the worship of Dionysos. At first a mere interlude, probably for the relief of the chorus as much as for the amusement of the audience, the dramatic performance ultimately assumed the first place, and the chorus became subservient and tributary. For a time the story was appropriately connected with the perils and sufferings of Dionysos; but it soon took a wider range, embracing, as in the case of Æschylos, the great cycle of Hellenic legends. But in the first instance, and indeed for long, the performance was purely a piece of minstrelsy. The earliest plays, both comedies and tragedies, were performed or recited by a single actor. Dryden, speaking as a dramatist, puts this well, in one of his prologues, when he says:—

Thespis, the first professor of our art,  
At country wakes *sung ballads* from a cart.

The cart is admitted to be an anachronism; for the couplet is an adaptation of the well-known line of Horace:—

Dicitur et *plaustris vexissa poemata* Thespis,—  
in which the Roman poet adopts the error, common in his day, of ascribing to Thespis the waggon, or movable scaffold of Susarion, the first comic dramatist. Thespis had, no doubt, a stable enough stage. But what we have to notice is the very accurate description which both Horace and Dryden give of what Thespis did—not what he did it on, or from. And what he did was to sing ballads. Now the claim of Thespis to be considered the father of Greek



tragedy consists in the circumstance that he was the first to put a separate actor on the stage, in the shape of the exarch or choral leader, who recited his story in the intervals of the dithyrambic chorus. The performance of the earliest Greek comedies by an individual actor, already incidentally referred to, is an equally notorious fact of literary history. Now, these single actors, in whose representations both comedy and tragedy originated, were but ballad minstrels of a higher sort, who gave greater effect to their recitals by adopting histrionic devices.

In the history of the drama of modern Europe, we are able to note a distinct stage at which the religious entertainments that led to it were of a purely lyrical and didactic character. Before they attained to a regular dramatic form they consisted of processions and set scenes, which were illustrated by lyrical recitations of the most striking passages in the lives of apostles, patriarchs, and saints. Sometimes these songs or sacred ballads were introduced in the celebration of the mass: sometimes, as in France, in the more questionable spectacles of the *Feast of the Ass* (of Balaam) and the *Feast of Fools*; sometimes, both in France and in England, in the festival of the *Boy-Bishop*. The undoubted fact seems to be that, to counteract the influence of the minstrels at fairs and festivals, the clergy, jealous of the popularity of their rivals, turned actors themselves, and substituted for the profane and often ribald entertainments of the minstrels, stories from the legends of the saints, and from the Bible itself. At one time the minstrels were allowed to entertain the people on Sundays with monkish legends, which they sang to the harp. But this also the clergy by and by took into their own hands. There is in the British Museum a collection of legendary rhymes, which were solemnly recited to the people on Sundays and holidays. Nay, some of the oldest extant sermons in the English language are metrical homilies of a distinctly ballad character; and this shows, more than anything else, the extent to which the clergy both feared and prized the power of minstrelsy. Now the clerical performers, in all their services, both dramatic and non-dramatic, were merely ecclesiastical minstrels, who found that they could best catch the popular ear, and win popular sympathy, by throwing the sacred and saintly narratives, first into a metrical, and afterwards into a dramatic form.

These views are strikingly corroborated by the evidence of language. In the fourteenth century the terms *tragedy* and *comedy* were by no means confined to dramatic poems, but were freely applied to metrical narratives. Dante's comedies were in no sense dramas. With Chaucer (see the prologue to the "Monk's Tale"), a tragedy is simply a tragic story; and Lydgate characterizes Chaucer's own poems as comedies and tragedies. But still further, we have it, on the authority of Professor Max Müller, that the name *mystery* (improperly written *mystery*), by which these religious plays are known, has no reference to anything mysterious or mystical in their subject. *Mystery*, *minstrelsy*, and *ministry* are, in point of fact, radically identical; and their different applications in modern times merely show how widely derivatives from the same root may diverge in meaning in the course of ages. All point to the idea of service; and in truth a *minister* is but a sacred *minstrel*; a *minstrel* is only a secular *minister*.

But it was not only in its earliest stage that this ballad character belonged to the miracle, or religious play. Even when its dramatic form was fully developed, it was still customary to represent a great part of its action by dumb show, and in *tableaux vivants*, while the story itself was recited by a single actor or by two or three of the chief characters, whose function brings us back once more to that of the old ballad minstrel.

Finally the *Epic* is at once the most direct and the grandest product of ballad poetry. The "Epic" is the finished temple, of which ballads are the separate pillars; the galaxy, of which ballads are the single stars of varying magnitudes. For unquestionably the greatest heroic poems in the world are essentially concretions of popular poetry, which first existed in the simple ballad form. This is true, not only of the Homeric poems, but also of the great national epics of mediæval times. Just as the "Iliad" is a great body of Greek traditional poetry — the growth of ages — moulded into a majestic whole by the hand of genius, so the great Norse Eddas and Sagas were compiled from still older legendary and mythical songs. The "Elder Edda," that of Saemund, an Icelandic priest, was compiled in the beginning of the twelfth century, from the most ancient mythological and heroic Scandinavian songs. About a century later the materials for the younger "Edda," that of Snorni, himself a Skald

by profession, were collected from the same sources. The Icelandic Sagas, which form a rich deposit in the literature of the Middle Ages, drew their material from the current Skaldic songs and national folk-lore. The fine old German epic, the "Niebelunglied," the oldest MS. of which is assigned to the beginning of the thirteenth century, was a compilation of previously existing songs and rhapsodies. The "Cid Romances in Spain," first published in the sixteenth century, but composed much earlier, were taken from ancient national *cantares* and Castilian *poemas*. In like manner the Carolingian romances in Central Europe, the Arthurian cycle in England, and the Wallace of Blind Harry in Scotland, are all great poetical concretions, the elements of which were in every case an earlier growth of legends, rhapsodies, and songs.

The elementary ballads and legends, from which these epics were built up, floated about—we cannot tell how long—in the minds and voices of the people, until there arose minstrels of greater genius, of higher art and constructive power, than their predecessors, who conceived the idea of welding these transient and isolated fragments into a solid whole. Now the great fact for us here is that, in nearly every case, the foundation ballads, the elementary germs, have entirely disappeared. Nor is this an unnatural result when it is remembered that, before the era of the printing-press, minstrelsy formed the very condition of the existence of popular poetry. Poems which ceased to be recited or sung, necessarily ceased to be. And when the greater epics came, in course of time, to form the stock in trade of the minstrels, it was inevitable that the minor epics—the ballads—should be forgotten.

It thus seems to be a fixed law of traditional literature that, when ballads came to be absorbed in epics and romances, they thereby sacrificed their individual and independent existence. We find their remains embedded, as it were, in a fossil state, in the great stratum of mediæval poetry; but as separate and living organisms they no longer exist. We have abundant evidence, both historical and traditional, that they did exist. Nay, the exact counterparts of legends which have been swallowed up in the epic poetry of one country, retain their separate individuality in another. The Danish ballads, the famous "Kæmpe Viser," which form the richest bequest of mediæval folk-lore, are an exception to the

general law of absorption. Developed by a long course of oral transmission, and collected in the fourteenth century, they have descended to us in their virgin ballad form. But we find in these simple ballads some of the identical legends which are woven into the Lay of the Niebelungs; from which we warrantably infer that they once existed as ballads in Germany also. This is a remarkable case of the exception proving the rule. Nothing, surely, could better bring out in bold relief the fact on which we are insisting, that national epics are a proof of the previous existence of national ballads. The epics and romances in which the ballads have been absorbed cannot, in strict propriety, be called ballads; but they retain, amid their complexity and prolixity, enough of the flavour and spirit of traditional poetry to bear witness to their ballad origin.

But it may be asked, if this law of absorption holds good, whence have we derived the important body of ballad poetry which forms one of the boasted treasures of our modern literature?

Now in this country, as in others, when the earlier romance epoch passed away, a new ballad epoch began, which was indebted for much of its material to the romances which it superseded. The romances were composed for, and addressed to, the great and noble; but when the progression of literature provided that class with more permanent works, in the shape of regular dramas and epics, and systematic histories, there still remained a large unlettered class of the community to whom the inheritance of oral poetry naturally descended. Elaborate romances did not suit their tastes. They demanded, as their simple forefathers had done, brief and pithy narratives. The minstrels, whose duty it was to cater for them, had to find material to satisfy their tastes. They found a convenient storehouse, full of the richest material, in the more elaborate romances. Thus it came to pass that the long poems, which had in the first instance been built up out of ballads, were, for the benefit of the common people, broken down into ballads again. And in point of fact not a few of our oldest ballads, and of these some of the most striking, are but chips of ancient and well-worn metrical romances. The well-known ballad of "Hynde Horn," for example, is but a paraphrase of part of the older romance or gest of "King Horn," which was itself, beyond question, a concoction of still older ballads and legends.



But it is not necessary to account for all our ballads on this principle. It is sufficient for our purpose to show that some have originated in this way; others were, undoubtedly, handed down in the lyrical form from earlier times, others were transplanted from foreign countries. But many, perhaps the most and best of those which we now have, owe their origin to the fact that in our country in comparatively recent times the circumstances which tend to call forth a body of traditionary poetry arose with irresistible power. These circumstances were the craving for literary excitement in the common people combined with the absence of culture and the power of literary appreciation, and the natural desire to glorify national and local heroes in popular verse. The same conditions which made ballad poetry a necessity in the ninth and tenth centuries, called it forth again in England and Scotland in the fifteenth and sixteenth. Some of the Robin Hood ballads were amongst the earliest productions of the English printing-press. "Chevy Chase" was an "old ballad" in Sir Philip Sidney's time; other ballads are echoed by snatches in Shakespeare and our old dramatists. But the great mass of our existing ballad literature cannot be traced further back than the fifteenth or the sixteenth century, which constitutes for us the special ballad epoch in our modern literature. When the old chronicles and romances gave place to the historical drama and the regular epic in one direction—that of literary culture, they were superseded by ballad minstrelsy in another direction—that of popular poetry. And the great fact to which our argument leads up is, that the mass of our extant ballad literature, which the labours of Bishop Percy and of Sir Walter Scott rescued from oblivion in the end of the last and the beginning of the present century, forms a later deposit, a tertiary stratum, which illustrates the life of comparatively recent and strictly historic times. Though purely oral compositions, living only in the hearts and memories of the people, they belong to a period contemporaneous with the methodical productions of literary art in every department of human thought. Not only while Gower and Chaucer were committing their thoughts that breathed to perishable parchment, not only while the works of Spenser and Shakespeare, of Milton and Bacon, were being multiplied by the printing-press; but after Dryden and Pope had given the

keenest polish to English diction and versification, there was still floating about freely in the intellectual atmosphere of this country a great body of traditionary poetry, not destined to be caught up or fixed down by the hard and fast conditions of literary art for many years afterwards.

For it is an important fact that our modern collections of ballads date only from the last century. A few versions of fugitive ballads had been included, along with modern material, in poetical miscellanies much earlier—in "Wit Restored," in 1658, and in Dryden's "Miscellany Poems" in 1684. But the earliest systematic editions of popular poetry are "A Collection of Old Ballads," published in London between 1723 and 1738, and the "Evergreen" of Allan Ramsay, published in Edinburgh in 1724. The two men, however, to whom we are chiefly indebted for recovering and preserving the rarest gems of our ballad poetry are Bishop Percy, whose "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" was first published in 1765, and Sir Walter Scott, whose two volumes of the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" appeared in 1802 and 1803 respectively. We may obtain some idea of the value of Scott's services in this department of literature from the fact that the "Minstrelsy" contains as many as forty ballads which had never before been taken down in writing, or published to the world. The rich field, in which Percy and Scott may be said first to have broken ground, has been extensively and profitably worked by enthusiastic labourers since their time. It would be unfair, in speaking of Scott's own labours in the ballad field, to ignore the valuable assistance which was willingly rendered to him by John Leyden, the gifted author of "Scenes of Infancy." Since the appearance of the "Minstrelsy," the collecting and editing of ballads, especially of Scottish ballads, has been the pet work of literary antiquaries. We can do no more here than refer in passing, but with grateful acknowledgments, to the labours of such men as Jamieson, Bird and Buchan, David Laing and Robert Chambers, Finlay and Kinloch, Sharpe and Maidment, Johnson and Motherwell, and last, though not least, William Edmondstone Aytoun, to whose fine literary instinct and critical acumen we owe the purest and most perfect collection we possess of the ballads of Scotland.

The labours of Percy and Scott, it should not be forgotten, had a much

wider bearing than that to which we have now referred. They exercised a most important influence in reviving that taste for genuine natural poetry, which forms the chief intellectual characteristic of the present century, and which extended itself to every department of literature and art. From the appearance of Percy's "Reliques" we are bound to date the recoil in the last generation from the cold formality which had characterized the poetry and thought of the preceding age. The impetus which Percy's labours gave to the poetical genius and taste of Scott is well known. The testimony of Wordsworth, the great apostle of the new poetic faith, is express and unequivocal. "I do not think," he says, "that there is one able writer in verse at the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the 'Reliques.' I know it is so with my friends [among whom Coleridge and Southey were conspicuous], and for myself," he adds, "I am happy to make a public avowal of my own." In this admission we may discover one of the reasons which led Wordsworth and Coleridge to call the poems which they produced jointly at an early stage in their career "lyrical ballads," though the title involves something of a cross division: for all true ballads, as we have endeavoured to show, must be lyrical. But it is interesting, as it is valuable, to have received from the most philosophical of modern poets, this testimony to the ballad origin of some at least of the features which characterize the modern school of poetry. As culture and intellectual refinement advance, the poet, wedded to his art, is ever prone to set himself above Nature, and to prefer his own wisdom to her mother-wit. But poetry, like history, of which it is the flower and the fruit, has a happy knack of repeating itself. And if it be true, as it undoubtedly is, that the poetry of our time owes both its strength and its sweetness to a rekindled allegiance to the nursing bosom of Nature, which, in spite of the vagaries of her prodigal sons, is ever one and the same, we owe this result, more perhaps than is generally recognized, to the influence of ballad poetry.

The historical ballad attained its highest perfection in those countries in which the chivalrous spirit was most fully developed—in England, Scotland, and Germany amongst northern nations, and in Spain amongst those of the south. In France, and Italy, on the other hand, where chivalry was transformed into

artificial knight-errantry and the fanciful championship of beauty, the national minstrelsy either assumed the form of passionate love songs, or degenerated into tedious prose romances. It is only where martial ardour is ennobled by national enthusiasm that scope is found for pure and healthy ballad poetry.

But it must be admitted that the historical ballads which have come down to us are not poetically the best specimens of their kind, at least, when judged by the canons of modern criticism. They are often tiresome from painful minuteness of detail. They are generally long, and sometimes dull. Purely poetical ideas in them are as a rule "few and far between." Their charm lies in their rough and ready vigour in the active scenes, relieved by dashes of quaint humour, and touches of melting pathos.

One old English ballad, quoted in Evans's collection, from the "Garland of Delight," dwells with a zest which there is no effort made to conceal, on the achievement of Lord Mayor Walworth, in stabbing Wat Tyler to the heart. In like manner battle scenes are favourite subjects with the Scottish historical muse, from "The Battle of Otterbourne," in the fourteenth, to "The Battle of Bothwell Bridge," in the seventeenth century; and nothing seems to inspire the *maker* so thoroughly as the intoxication of blood. Indeed these old Scottish heroic ballads glory in slaughter in a way that shocks the sensibility of modern times. It was evidently a good joke to describe how a Percy was spitted so perfectly that the spear protruded from his back, "a large cloth yard, and more." In the same ballad we read how

The Percy and Montgomery met,  
That either of other was fain;  
They swakkit swords, and sore they swat,  
And the blood ran down between.

Such passages, given with proper effect, could not fail to "bring down the house," in times when bloodshed was still regarded by most men as the great business of life. Yet there mingle strangely with these exhibitions of grim, ferocious humour, touches of the finest pathos, and hearty recognitions of knightly courtesy. Such, for example, is the scene in which the victorious Percy mourns over his fallen foe, on Cheviot side:—

The Percy leaned on his brand,  
And saw the Douglas dee:  
He took the dead man by the hand,  
And said: "Wae's me for thee:

"To save thy life, I'd have parted with  
My lands for yearès three;  
For a better man, of head nor hand,  
Was not in all the North countrie."

The fate of the heroic Witherington,  
too, touches the minstrel's heart : —

Of Witherington my heart was wae,  
That ever he slain should be;  
For, when both his legs had been hewn in twa,  
He kneeled and fought on his knee.

And very fine and solemn is the minstrel's account of the mourning after the combat : —

So on the morrow they made them biers,  
Of birch and hazel so gray;  
Many widows with weeping tears  
Came to fetch their makes away.

Here, surely, if anywhere, we have the "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin" !

The Scottish version of "The Battle of Otterbourne" is remarkable, as containing an element of superstition similar to that which we find in many of our legendary ballads. Douglas is mortally wounded; but with his last breath he orders the fight to be continued till the old prophecy should be fulfilled, that "a dead Douglas should win a field." This touched upon a favourite superstition of the times, which the minstrels of all countries did not fail to turn to account. It was obviously intended, not merely to divest the last enemy of some of his terrors, but also to invest the circumstance of death on the battle-field with a special glory. Thus in the last victory gained by the Cid Campeador, on the plains of Valencia, his corpse, clad in panoply, was bound to his charger, and led to the front, between two valiant knights; and the Moors, we are told, were so appalled by the apparition, that they turned and fled. But in the case of the "dead Douglas," at Otterbourne, the narrative is more picturesque and circumstantial. Before the battle began he is represented as saying to his faithful page : —

But I have dreamed a dreary dream  
Beyond the isle of Skye :  
I saw a dead man win a fight,  
And I think that man was I.

When struck down, he says to Montgomerie, his nephew : —

My wound is deep ; I fain would sleep :  
Take thou the vanguard of the three ;  
And bury me by the bracken bush,  
That grows on yonder lily lea.

So; when Percy, in turn, is struck

down, and asks to whom he must yield, Montgomerie replies : —

Thou shalt not yield to lord or loun,  
Nor yet shalt thou yield to me ;  
But yield thee to the bracken bush  
That grows on yonder lily lea.

Into the early English historical ballads, or ballads with a historical basis, there were frequently imported satirical elements, which made them less ballads, in the strict sense, than political songs. Warton \* quotes an excellent specimen of this class of poems, in which a partisan of Simon de Montfort casts unmeasured ridicule on Richard, King of the Romans ("Richard of Alemaigne"), brother of Henry III., who was taken prisoner along with the latter at the battle of Lewes (1264). So effective was the humour of this ballad or song, that it is believed to have occasioned a statute against libels in the year 1275, under the title "Against Slanderous Reports, or Tales to cause Discord betwixt King and People." "About the present era," says Warton, "we meet with a ballad complaining of the exorbitant fees extorted, and the numerous taxes levied, by the king's officers." A little later (1306) there is a similar effusion complaining bitterly of the conduct of the justices appointed by Edward I. to carry on the government during his absence in the French and Scottish wars. In the reign of Henry VI., in the next century, a satirical ballad, commenting severely on the proceedings of the king and his counselors, then sitting in Parliament, was stuck on the gates of the royal palace. Of the same nature were the scurrilous songs which held up "Old Noll" to ridicule in the time of the civil war. The Revolution had its triumphant, but now meaningless "Lillibulero." The Scottish rebellion in the eighteenth century called forth a host of vigorous Jacobite songs. But these productions, though they owe their existence in some measure to the same circumstances which, in less sophisticated times, gave rise to genuine ballads, do not, any more than the Corn-laws rhymes of Ebenezer Elliot in the present century, belong in any proper sense to ballad literature. They are chiefly interesting as showing how, when intellectual culture spreads, popular feeling seeks out new and more reflective channels through which to express itself.

A considerable section of our national

\* "History of English Poetry," section II.

ballads, both English and Scottish, relates to outlawry and freebooting life. This can hardly be surprising when we remember how unsettled society was, in both divisions of the island during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries especially, and on the border-land between the two countries at a still later period. The mode of life of the freebooters, combining in a marked degree the elements of lawless and defiant danger on the one hand, and free-handed liberality on the other, presented features of romance which invited poetical treatment. To this class, indeed, belong the best of the old English ballads — those, namely, which treat of the career and exploits of Robin Hood and Little John, and Will Scarlet and Friar Tuck, and the other merry men who dwelt, as their wits could best devise, under the greenwood in Sherwood Forest. The Robin Hood of the ballads, at least, can no longer be regarded as a historical personage; but it is remarkable that his name has been far more popular with the English peasantry than the names of many real heroes. The reason of this is, that his career was typical of a popular cause — to wit, that resistance to the severe and unjust forest-laws, which long after the distinction of Norman and Englishman was forgotten, kept up the old jealousy between the nobility and the common people. By the common people Robin Hood was unquestionably regarded as a real personage — as their hero and champion. And he was as great a favourite on the north of the Tweed as on the south. There is a genuine old Scottish ballad, detailing the story of his noble birth; and "The Play of Robin Hood" was a favourite pastime at the annual sports of many Scottish burghs until the end of the sixteenth century, when it fell under the ban of the General Assembly of the Kirk. Every reader of Scott remembers how effectively it is introduced in the Stirling sports described in the Fifth canto of "*The Lady of the Lake*." He was a great favourite too, with the minstrels, who have adorned his character with all heroic and gentle attributes. But the great number of the ballads in which he figures — between thirty and forty, and these of very unequal interest and merit — seems to countenance the theory that every law-defying adventure in the forest, real or imaginable, was fathered upon Robin; and that "Robin Hood" became a kind of generic name for daring freebooters and outlaws.

The Border land, both English and Scottish, was the favourite haunt of marauding bands down till comparatively recent times. No doubt international jealousy tended to perpetuate this state of matters, and to obtain for it a kind of semi-official sanction; for the "raids" were regarded as quite legitimate so long as they were made by either party on the other side of the Border, and were conducted in conformity with "the truce of Bordertide."

On either side there was a Lord of the Marches, to whose judgment doubtful cases were appealed, and who not only sanctioned, but often led, the predatory inroads. The Scotts of Buccleuch, on the north of the Border, had their counterparts in the Lord Scroops and false Salkelds on the south. If England had its Clym o' the Clough and William of Cloudesley, Scotland had its Johnnie Armstrong and Kinmont Willie, its Jock o' the Side and Jamie Telfer, and a host of others. For the Scottish reavers were both more numerous and more daring than their English rivals, to which the fact is, no doubt, in great measure owing that the Scottish Border ballads of this class are superior, not in number merely, but also in merit, to those of England.

The great mass of the Border ballads are connected, directly or indirectly, with the lives and deeds of adventurous freebooters, who lived by levying black-mail upon their weaker neighbours. Plunder was the avowed profession of these men. Of John Armstrong, the laird of Gilnockie, it is the minstrel's boast that, though

He has no lands, nor rents coming in,  
He keeps eight-score men in his hall.

He has horse and harness for them all —  
Goodly steeds that be milk-white;  
And goodly belts about their necks,  
With hats and feathers all alike.

Their whole life was a well-planned system of petty warfare — a prolonged struggle for existence — in which

The good old rule  
Sufficed them — the simple plan,  
That they should take who had the power,  
And they should keep who can.

This was their creed; yet there was method in the mad lawlessness of these marauders. There was honour among these Border thieves. One of them could boast with his last breath, on the gallows —

I've lo'ed naething in a' my life,  
I will daur say't, but honestie!

Their conception of honesty, however, consisted in a loyal and profitable adherence to the *lex talionis*. They held that they might do as they were done by, with impunity. Lord Scroop says to Dick o' the Cow, a noted Cumberland reaver : —

I give thee leave, my honest fool —  
Thou speak'st against my honour and me :  
Unless thou gie me thy troth and thy hand,  
Thou'lt steal from none but who stole from thee.

And Dick replies : —

There's my growth and my right hand —  
My head shall hang on Haribee,  
I'll ne'er cross Carlisle Sands again  
If I steal frae a man but wha stole frae me.

In the same spirit Johnnie Armstrong boasted to the King : —

England should have found me meat and mault  
Gif I had lived this hundred year :  
She should have found me meat and mault,  
And beef and mutton in all plentie ;  
But ne'er a Scot's wife could have said,  
That e'er I skaited her a poor flea.

Such strokes of humour are frequent in the ballads of plundering warfare. "Kinmont Willie" for example is full of them. But no less common are touches of the finest pathos. What, for instance, could be finer than these stanzas from "Edom o' Gordon," in which the fate of the little daughter of the castle, to which Edom has set fire, is described : —

They rolled her in a pair of sheets,  
And dropped her o'er the wall ;  
But on the point of Gordon's spear  
She got a deadly fall.

O bonny, bonny was her mouth,  
And cherry were her cheeks,  
And clear, clear was her yellow hair,  
Whereon the red blood dreeps.

Then with his spear he turned her o'er ;  
O, but her face was wan !  
He said, "You are the first that e'er  
I wished alive again."

He turned her o'er, and o'er again ;  
O, but her skin was white !  
"I might have spared that bonny face,  
To have been some man's delight.

"Busk and bounce, my merry men all,  
For ill dooms I do guess ;  
I canna look on that bonny face  
As it lies on the grass."

Students of Scottish ballad poetry are aware that "Edom o' Gordon" is one of the romantic series condemned as spurious imitations by the late Dr. Robert

Chambers. Himself an able and appreciative editor of ballads in his earlier years (1829), he published, when advanced in life, an elaborate argument\* to prove that many of our best romantic ballads, including "Sir Patrick Spens," "Gil Morrice," "Young Waters," "The Douglas Tragedy," and some twenty others, were written by Lady Wardlaw, of Pitreavie, who died in 1727. The foundation of his argument is the fact that "Hardy Knut," which was published professedly as an old ballad in 1719, and in which the style and diction of the traditionary ballads are very skilfully imitated, was subsequently acknowledged to be the composition of Lady Wardlaw. He finds that the versions of many of these ballads given by Percy, through whom they were first published, rest upon no ancient manuscript authority, but were printed "from a manuscript copy sent from Scotland," or "from a written copy that appears to have received some modern corrections," or "as it was preserved in the memory of a lady that is now dead." Suspicion being thus aroused, he proceeds to compare these ballads with one another, and with the avowedly spurious "Hardy Knut ;" and he finds so many points of resemblance, both in plan of treatment and in turn of expression, that he is forced to assign the whole of this remarkable body of romantic literature to Lady Wardlaw's single pen.

The whole of the evidence on which Dr. Chambers bases his case reduces itself to two points, — the absence of ancient manuscript authority, and the alleged coincidences of thought and expression observed in the ballads.

To the former ground very little weight can be attached. It is of the nature and essence of a national ballad to be traditionary. As soon as it is committed to manuscript, or to type, its traditionary career is cut short, and it becomes a part of regular literature. In the history of every traditionary ballad there must have been a time when it was first committed to manuscript, and if that time was recent, it is impossible that any "ancient manuscript" can be appealed to. The fact has already been mentioned that in Scott's "Minstrelsy" there are upwards of thirty ballads which had never before been published, but which he and Leyden and other friends ferreted out and wrote down in the course of their "border

\* We give the title of Dr. Chambers's brochure at the head of this article.



raids." Now, when Scott wrote a ballad, — and he wrote many, — he always took the credit of it. He never attempted to conceal his authorship of "Glenfinlas," or "The Massacre of Glencoe," or "The Eve of St. John," or "The Gray Brother." Leyden, in like manner, acknowledged himself the author of "The Mermaid" and "Lord Soulis," and other ballads. But there was never a whispered doubt of the genuineness of "Jamie Telfer" or "Kinmont Willie," of the "Cruel Sister" or the "Demon Lover," of the "Dowie Dens o' Yarrow" or "The Wife of Usher's Well," or of a host of others which Scott first gave to the world. Yet there were no "ancient manuscripts" of these poems. If there had been, the probability is that their first publication would not have been reserved for Scott.

The mere absence of "ancient manuscript" authority therefore is in itself no sufficient ground for questioning the genuine antiquity of ballads taken down and published at a still later date than that of those which Dr. Chambers impeaches.

A better proof of antiquity than that of manuscript authority is the existence in different districts of different versions of the same ballad. Now this is the case with what Dr. Chambers calls the romantic, but what is more correctly called the historical ballad of "Sir Patrick Spence." When Percy first printed this ballad, in 1765, "from two MSS. copies transmitted from Scotland," it contained only eleven stanzas. When Scott reproduced it in 1802, he was able to add at least ten new stanzas, obtained from independent dictation. In 1806 Robert Jamieson published another version of the same ballad in eighteen stanzas, and in 1828 yet another version was produced by Peter Buchan comprising twenty-nine stanzas. The remarkable fact to be noticed in connection with these different versions of "Sir Patrick Spence" is, that no one stanza in the versions of Jamieson and Buchan is exactly the same as, or exactly corresponds with, the combined version of Percy and Scott. Now this is precisely what would occur, — what occurs over and over again, — in the case of traditional ballads. And this is a crucial test. For, as Mr. Norval Clyne well remarks —

"Sir Patrick" is the corner stone of the structure raised by Mr. Chambers. If he has failed to prove, or show reasonable grounds for believing, that the author of "Hardy Knut" and "Sir Patrick Spence" was one and the same person, or that the latter poem is

a production of the eighteenth century, the whole of his precarious edifice comes to the ground, a baseless fabric. He dwells strongly on points of resemblance between the several ballads in dispute, and argues somewhat in this fashion: Number *one* has expressions similar to those in "Hardy Knut;" number *two* contains lines or words wonderfully like some in number *one*; number *three* has, in a similar way, a resemblance to numbers *one* and *two*; and so forth through the whole twenty-five pieces. Take away number *one*, therefore, to wit, "Sir Patrick Spence," and Mr. Chambers's logic, unsound enough before, becomes too defective to be mentioned with gravity.\*

This leaves the point in dispute, therefore, to be determined solely by internal evidence; that is, by a comparison of the ballads whose genuineness is doubted with one another, and with "Hardy Knut," whose modern authorship is unquestionable. Now, here it should be noted that, considering the nature of traditional poetry, considering especially the manner in which necessarily it is propagated and conserved, mere coincidences of expression and treatment afford in themselves no reliable proof of identity of origin. We find not merely phrases, not merely lines, but whole stanzas freely interchanged, with but slight variations, in ballads the antiquity of which is beyond the reach of question. Dr. Chambers's argument proves too much. For there are numerous expressions in ballads the genuineness of which he did not dispute, which bear the closest affinity to, nay, which are identical with, expressions in the ballads which he condemned as spurious.

Further, it happens unfortunately for Dr. Chambers's argument, that "Hardy Knut" is admitted on all hands to be immeasurably inferior as a poem to the ballads with which he expressly compares it. He himself refers several times to the "stiff and somewhat puerile" manner of that poem. There are many lines, even in the parts of "Hardy Knut" which he has quoted, which have a distinctly modern flavour. Such lines as —

With noble chiefs in brave array ; —  
Full twenty thousand glittering spears  
The King of Norse commands ; —  
Kind chieftain, your intent pursue ; —  
But soon beneath some drapping tree  
Cauld death shall end my care. —

\* Mr. Clyne's brochure is a systematic and exceedingly able and convincing reply to Dr. Chambers's paper. Apart from the general argument, it disposes most successfully of the verbal coincidences on which Dr. Chambers laid so much weight.



Ne'er to return to native land,  
 Nae mair, with blithesome sounds,  
 To boast the glories of the day,  
 And shaw their shining wounds.

Such lines as these, we say, in spite of "drapping" for "dropping," "cauld" for "cold," "shaw" for "show," and "lang" for "long," betray at once their modern cast of thought. There is nothing specially ballad-like about them, and nothing specially poetical. They might have appeared in any commonplace eighteenth century poem. Now we find no such commonplace modern lines, no such feeble expressions, as those quoted above, in the other ballads whose genuineness is impeached.

Peculiarities of grammatical construction form a better test of authorship than similarities of expression, or even of treatment. "Hardy Knut" is free from such singularities, from first to last. But in the first six stanzas of "Sir Patrick Spence" there occurs three times an idiom so peculiar that, to have been used so frequently, it must have been an idiosyncrasy of the author; and, supposing "Hardy Knut" to have been the production of the same hand, it is hardly possible that that hand could have written so long a poem without introducing it once at least. The peculiarity to which we refer is the omission of the relative in the nominative case. We find this in the second stanza:—

Up and spak an eldern Knight  
 (*Who*) sat at the king's right knee.

We find a curious repetition of it in the third stanza:—

And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence  
 (*Who*) was walking on the sand.

And we find it again in the sixth stanza:—

O wha is this (*that*) has done this deed,  
 This ill deed done to me.

Now this is no ordinary ellipsis. The omission of the relative in the objective case is common enough; but the omission of the subject relative is very rare. In fact, as an idiom, it is peculiar to Shakespeare and the writers of the sixteenth century, who, like him, adopted an excessively condensed style of diction. At the same time it is not a peculiarity which is likely to have been adopted by any one of set purpose. No one but a professed anatomist of language could be expected to take note of such a singularity. It is an unconscious idiom, and its frequent use indicates a mind fond of

compression and ellipsis. So peculiar, or as the Scots say so "kenspeckle," a mark is it that, if it had been found but once in "Hardy Knut," we should have acknowledged that as itself a weighty argument in support of Dr. Chambers's view. But as it does not occur once there, we regard its absence as an equally weighty argument on the other side.

The same may be said, with nearly as much force, of another peculiar construction which we have in "Sir Patrick Spence" but for which we shall look in vain in "Hardy Knut." This time it is not ellipsis but redundancy, and a redundancy which is common in the older ballads. It consists in the unnecessary use of a pronoun to mark an object or person already specified. This occurs several times in "Sir Patrick Spence" in such familiar forms as—

The King's daughter of Norway,  
 'Tis thou maun bring *her* hame.

Now since these inward and more subtle peculiarities of the style of "Sir Patrick Spence" are totally absent from "Hardy Knut," the question occurs: May not the outward and merely verbal coincidences, on which so much stress is laid, be accounted for in another way? There is one line the same in both ballads—

Drinking the blude-red wine;

and a line very like this may be found in many other ballads. But is this a sufficient reason for assigning both ballads to the same author? Is it not far more probable that the author of "Hardy Knut" unconsciously appropriated the line from the other and older ballad? It must be acknowledged that Lady Wardlaw could not have written "Hardy Knut," even with all its imperfections, unless she had previously filled her mind with ballad lore. The very task she set herself in that case—to write a mock-antique ballad—required her to school herself in the peculiarities of ballad diction. It is far more probable, therefore, that "Hardy Knut" was modelled on the superior ballads with which it is compared, than that the superior ballads were also the work of the hand to which only one ballad has been clearly brought home. No amount of garnish, in the shape of antique spelling and Scottish forms, can conceal the modern flavour in the single well-authenticated case. How happens it that this flavour is so hard to

detect in the others? With all respect, therefore, for Robert Chambers's literary taste and honest scepticism, we must hold fast to the conviction that the great mass of our romantic ballads have had an undoubted traditionary origin, and are as old at least as Shakespeare and the regular drama.

Perhaps it is natural, when we consider the strife and lawlessness and bloodshed which formed to so great an extent the education of the people, that tragic features should so generally abound in these romantic ballads. Many of them have rendered the peaceful valleys and pastoral slopes of the lowlands of Scotland classic ground, which bards of later times have trodden with reverent and loving steps. Such a region, for example, is the "Braes of Yarrow," in Selkirkshire, where

The swan on lone St. Mary's lake  
Floats double, swan and shadow.

Yarrow has its own special galaxy of song, and is rich in poetic memories. It inspired Hamilton of Bangour to write his exquisite verses on "The Braes of Yarrow." To Scott it was hallowed soil, making his eyes now gleam with fire, now glisten with moisture, as he recited the triumphs and the trials of his clansmen. Here the Ettrick shepherd heard the skylark sing —

Bird of the wilderness,  
Blithesome and cumberless,  
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea.

Wordsworth, too, delighted in a district which drew from his poetical enthusiasm some of the choicest of his natural lyrics, witness "Yarrow Unvisited," "Yarrow Visited," "Yarrow Revisited." But finest of all, we venture to think, is the original ballad that first consecrated the soil from which so much and so rich romantic fruit has sprung — "The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow," — a ballad which for dramatic power and heart-rending pathos has few equals in the whole range of traditionary poetry.

It is interesting to observe the light which these old ballads throw, not only on the manners and customs of the people in bygone times, but also on their peculiar beliefs and feelings. Prominent among the superstitions which grow with wild luxuriance in this romantic soil, is the belief in the monitory power of dreams. On the eve of his fatal victory at Otterbourne, the Douglas saw in a dream a dead man win a field. It was a

dream that sent Robin Hood in search of Sir Guy of Gisborne. It was a dream that told "love Gregory" that "Annie of Lochroyan" had been turned from his door at midnight by his heartless mother, and that drew him to seek her by the wild sea-shore, where —

He caught her by the yellow hair,  
And drew her to the strand;  
But cold and stiff was every limb,  
Before they reached the land.

And it was a dream that led "the Rose of Yarrow" in the Dowie Dens to wander forth in search of her murdered lord.

The nature of her dream points to another widely prevalent superstition. She dreamt that she "pu'd the birk" with her true love in Yarrow. The birch was believed to grow at the gate of Paradise; and to dream of it, therefore, was accepted as a forewarning of death. The birk was also the badge of the dead who revisited the earth; for the return of the dead was a universally accepted article in the Border faith. Without a twig of the birk it was believed that their souls could not be at rest, nor their bodies lie peacefully in their graves. Thus when the troubled spirit of "Clerk Saunders" returns to "May Margaret" he tells her to

Plait a wand of the bonnie birk,  
And lay it on my breast;  
And go you home, May Margaret,  
And wish my soul good rest.

One fine and most touching ballad — "The Wife of Usher's Well" — is full of these superstitions. When the Wife's two stalwart sons, whom she sent "owre the sea" returned to her, "their hats were o' the birk" : —

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,  
Nor yet in ony sheugh;  
But at the gates o' Paradise  
That birk grew fair enough.

Then we have the cock-crowing as the signal for the ghosts to depart. The older says to the younger brother, —

The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw,  
The channerin worm doth chide;  
Gin we be missed out o' our place,  
A sair pain we maun bide.

The remonstrance of the younger brother is too fine to be omitted : —

Lie still, lie still but a little wee while,  
Lie still but if we may;  
Gin our mither miss us when she wakes,  
She'll go mad ere it be day.

Another curious feature in the romantic ballads is the use they frequently

make of communication by birds. This was peculiarly an Eastern tradition. Interpretation of the language of birds was a department of science on which the Arabians especially piqued themselves; and it has been suggested that our poets and chroniclers may have obtained the idea from the crusading troubadours. But it is not necessary to have recourse to any such learned explanation, as this kind of personification has entered into the natural mythology of all countries.

The parrot of May Collean, [says Aytoun] was a fowl of shrewdness and discretion; but the "bonny bird," who, in the ballad of "Young Hunter," reveals the murder, was conscientious in the extreme, and moreover proof against temptation. Another warns the mother of Johnny of Braidislee that her son is lying wounded in the forest; whilst "the gay goss-hawk" shows itself superior to any page in the delivery of a message.\*

The page also holds a prominent place among the *dramatis personæ* of the romantic ballads. The plot, such as it is, often turns on the manner in which he discharges his duty. Indeed he is sometimes a hero in disguise. The intrepid Willie of "Gil Morrice" may be taken as a type of the class; and not unfrequently, as in his case, the "bonnie boy" exhibits a sense of propriety and decency which puts the moral laxity of his master to shame.

The intermixture of the spiritual and material worlds in the "Romantic Ballads" has given rise in modern times to a distinct school of ballad poetry, which has found its best exponents among German poets. The first of the school was Gottfried Bürger, who died in 1794, and he was followed by Schiller, Goethe, and Uhland. The most striking feature in their ballads, apart from their free use of supernatural agency, is the introduction of dramatic dialogue, which is a modern demonstration of that close affinity between ballad and dramatic poetry on which we have already insisted. Yet this is merely a later development of our own native ballad literature, with which one and all of these German poets were intimately acquainted. Of Bürger it is expressly recorded that his study of Percy's "Reliques" had the greatest influence in determining the line of poetry which he ultimately adopted. But the debt was richly repaid; for Sir Walter Scott is reported to have said of the translation of Bürger's "Lenore" by William Taylor of

Norwich—"This was what made me a poet. I had several times attempted the more regular kinds of poetry without success, but here was something I thought I could do." Accordingly, Scott's translation of that fine ballad was one of his earliest poetical efforts; and in most of his larger poems he has availed himself freely of supernatural agency,—witness the tale of "The Elfín Warrior," and the apparitions at the city cross in "Marmion;" and the "Oracle of the Hide" in "The Lady of the Lake;" while "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" is expressly founded on a ghostly legend. Coleridge is a still more enthusiastic and thorough-going disciple of the same school. Indeed, no better example of this species of ballad, in which the natural and the supernatural elements are deftly interwoven, exists in any language, than his "Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

Akin to this supernatural ingredient in the ballads is a fairy element, which enters into a considerable number of them, and which is evidently taken from the mythology of the northern nations. The Elf-land of the ballads is an underground region, peopled with daring spirits who make night-raids on the realms of humanity. There is an Elf-king (the "Elb-ric" of the Germans, transformed into "Oberon" by the French romancists); but he is entirely subordinate to the Elf-Queen ("Titania,") who adds the charms of beauty to her sovereign rights. The king is allowed to lead an idle and luxurious life, so long as he does not interfere with his wife's prerogative. She and her elves were regarded with considerable favour in some districts; but there was a spice of malignity in some of their proceedings, which engendered a feeling of distrust and fear. This, however, was held to be more their misfortune than their fault. If they occasionally kidnapped a human being, they did it in self-defence. For they were bound, once in seven years, to yield up a soul as tribute, or "kane," to the master-fiend; and they naturally preferred to obtain a human being for this purpose, to sacrificing one of themselves.

The great hero of the "Fairy Legends" was Thomas the Rhymer, or True Thomas (more fully, Thomas Learmont, of Erclidoune, a village near Lauder, where the ruins of his tower are still pointed out), who flourished in the end of the thirteenth century. In his adventures, as recorded by himself, Christian and heathen elements are strangely intermingled. When

\* "The Ballads of Scotland," Introduction, p. xlix.

the Elf-queen visits him, he salutes her as queen of heaven; and as a penalty of stealing a kiss from her, she carries him off as her milk-white steed, and makes him her slave for seven years. She takes him to a wide desert, and there shows him three "ferlies" or wonders. The first is a "broad way":—

That is the path of wickedness,  
Though some call it the road to heaven.

The second is the "narrow way"—

So thick beset with thorns and briars;  
That is the way to fair Elf-land,  
Though after it but few enquires.

The third is also a "narrow road"—

That winds about the ferny brae;  
That is the way to fair Elf-land,  
Where you and I this night must gae.

As she carries him along the road, where there was neither sun nor moon to light their path, and all sounds were drowned by the weird "roaring of a sea," the queen tells him that he must not speak, else he shall never return to earth. The terrors through which he passed were enough to seal his lips and make his blood run cold:—

It was mirk, mirk nicht; there was nae stern-  
light,  
And they waded through red blud to the  
knee;  
For a the blud that's shed on earth  
Rins thro' the springs o' that countrie.

After undergoing an education of seven years at the hands of the Elf-queen, True Thomas returns to upper air, endued with powers which gained for him the reputation of a wizard and prophet. To a late day, his sayings and predictions were household words amongst the credulous and superstitious in Scotland. But there is reason to suspect that, as in the case of Robin Hood and other popular heroes, he is credited with many exploits in which he had no concern.

A word, in conclusion, on modern ballads. At the outset we described a ballad as primarily and essentially a traditional poem. But if we adhere to our definition in its integrity, the strictly ballad epoch must have been extinguished by the invention of printing; and thereafter the production of a genuine ballad became almost, if not altogether, an impossibility. Certainly the age of traditional ballads is past and gone. But the history of the word *ballad* has shown us that the application of such terms must vary with the conditions under which

literature is produced. And we should do unpardonable injustice at once to the power of poetry and to the spirit of nationality and of humanity, if we denied that poems inspired by the ballad emotion could be produced in a literary age, or disseminated by the printing press. All that is necessary is that we should clearly recognize the essential difference between the natural ballad and the ballad of literary culture. The former bears the stamp of its age; the latter of the individual poet. They differ much as the wild and dew-fed violet of the meadows differs from the cultivated pansy of our gardens; as the *volks-epos* of the German critics—the popular epic—differs from the *kunst-epos*—the epic of literary culture; as Homer's "Iliad," for example, differs from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King."

Now, not only have we many modern poems answering to this description, but such poems form, in point of fact, one of the richest and most attractive departments of our modern literature. Some of these modern ballads indeed are simply old friends with new faces. Scott's "Young Lochinvar" tells the same story as the old ballad of "Katharine of Janfarie," "The Lass o' Lochbryan," suggested Burns's song of "Lord Gregory," Tennyson's "Lord of Burleigh" is simply a modern version of the fine old ballad of "Donald of the Isles; or Lizzie Lindsay." The "Auld Robin Gray" of Lady Anne Lindsay is nearly a perfect example of a pathetic and homely ballad—a poem which will be remembered and loved long after more ambitious works are forgotten. For there is in the brevity and compactness of a ballad an element which gives it a far better chance of longevity than more elaborate productions. This is, no doubt, the great reason why the most widely popular poems—we do not say the greatest poems, but the poems which take the firmest grip of the sympathies and the memories of the great mass of the people; the poems with which, in the popular mind, the fame even of the greatest poets is most closely linked—are ballad poems. Is not "Tam o' Shanter" Burns's masterpiece? And "Tam o' Shanter" is an incomparable ballad, a powerful dramatic lyric. Or take a second famous ride; is not Cowper known and admired as the author of "John Gilpin" by thousands who never read "Expostulation," and have only dipped into "The Task"? And "John Gilpin" is essentially a ballad. Or take a third famous ride; how many, even in these days

of "light and sweetness," read, or reading understand "Sordello"? Yet who does not enjoy and enter heartily into the spirit of "Good News from Ghent"? Take, finally, the case of the Laureate. "In Memoriam" is undoubtedly a great poem, a poem which, of its kind, stands almost alone, and which, in the opinion of the best judges, is still, and is likely to remain, Tennyson's masterpiece. Yet for every one who reads and cherishes that poem — and they are not few — there are hundreds who know and appreciate Tennyson only as the author of such simple and heart-touching ballads as "The Lord of Burleigh" and "Lady Clare."

From The Cornhill Magazine.  
FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FAIR: THE JOURNEY: THE FIRE.

Two months passed away. We are brought on to a day in February, on which was held the yearly statute or hiring fair in the town of Casterbridge.

At one end of the street stood from two to three hundred blithe and hearty labourers waiting upon Chance — all men of the stamp to whom labour suggests nothing worse than a wrestle with gravitation, and pleasure nothing better than a renunciation of the same. Among these, carters and waggoners were distinguished by having a piece of whip-cord twisted round their hats; thatchers wore a fragment of woven straw; shepherds held their sheep-crooks in their hands; and thus the situation required was known to the hirers at a glance.

In the crowd was an athletic young fellow of somewhat superior appearance to the rest — in fact, his superiority was marked enough to lead several ruddy peasants standing by to speak to him inquiringly, as to a farmer, and to use "Sir" as a terminational word. His answer always was,—

"I am looking for a place myself — a bailiff's. Do you know of anybody who wants one?"

Gabriel was paler now. His eyes were more meditative, and his expression was more sad. He had passed through an ordeal of wretchedness which had given him more than it had taken away. He had lost all he possessed of worldly property. He had sunk from his modest elevation down to a lower ditch than that

whence he had started; but there was left to him a dignified calm he had never before known, and that indifference to fate which, though it often makes a villain of a man, is the basis of his sublimity when it does not. And thus the abasement had been exaltation, and the loss gain.

In the morning a regiment of cavalry had left the town, and a sergeant and his party had been beating up for recruits through the four streets. As the end of the day drew on, and he found himself not hired, Gabriel almost wished that he had joined them, and gone off to serve his country. Weary of standing in the market-place, and not much minding the kind of work he turned his hand to, he decided to offer himself in some other capacity than that of bailiff.

All the farmers seemed to be wanting shepherds. Sheep-tending was Gabriel's speciality. Turning down an obscure street and entering an obscurer lane, he went up to a smith's shop.

"How long would it take you to make a shepherd's crook?"

"Twenty minutes."

"How much?"

"Two shillings."

He sat on a bench and the crook was made, a stem being given him into the bargain.

He then went to a ready-made clothes' shop, the owner of which had a large rural connection. As the crook had absorbed most of Gabriel's money, he attempted, and carried out, an exchange of his overcoat for a shepherd's regulation smock-frock.

This transaction having been completed, he again hurried off to the centre of the town, and stood on the kerb of the pavement, as a shepherd, crook in hand.

Now that Oak had turned himself into a shepherd, it seemed that bailiffs were most in demand. However, two or three farmers noticed him and drew near. Dialogues followed, more or less in the subjoined form:

"Where do you come from?"

"Norcombe."

"That's a long way."

"Twenty miles."

"Whose farm were you upon last?"

"My own."

This reply invariably operated like a rumour of cholera. The inquiring farmer would edge away and shake his head dubiously. Gabriel, like his dog, was too good to be trustworthy, and he



never made any advance beyond this point.

It is better to accept any chance that offers itself, and then extemporize a procedure to fit it, than to get a good plan matured, and wait for a chance of using it. Gabriel wished he had not nailed up his colours as a shepherd, but had instead laid himself out for anything in the whole cycle of labour that was required in the fair. It grew dusk. Some merry men were whistling and singing by the corn-exchange. Gabriel's hand, which had lain for some time idle in his smock-frock pocket, touched his flute, which he carried there. Here was an opportunity for putting his dearly bought wisdom into practice.

He drew out his flute and began to play "Jockey to the Fair" in the style of a man who had never known a moment's sorrow. Oak could pipe with Arcadian sweetness, and the sound of the well-known notes cheered his own heart as well as those of the loungers. He played on with spirit, and in half an hour had earned in pence what was a small fortune to a destitute man.

By making inquiries he learnt that there was another fair at Shottsford the next day.

"Where is Shottsford?"

"Eight miles t'other side of Weatherbury."

Weatherbury! It was where Bathsheba had gone two months before. This information was like coming from night into noon.

"How far is it to Weatherbury?"

"Five or six miles."

Bathsheba had probably left Weatherbury long before this time, but the place had enough interest attaching to it to lead Oak to choose Shottsford fair as his next field of inquiry, because it lay in the Weatherbury quarter. Moreover the Weatherbury folk were by no means uninteresting intrinsically. If report spoke truly they were as hardy, merry, thriving, wicked a set as any in the whole county. Oak resolved to sleep at Weatherbury that night on his way to Shottsford, and struck out at once into a footpath which had been recommended as a short cut to the village in question.

The path wended through water-meadows traversed by little brooks, whose quivering surfaces were braided along the centres, and folded into creases at the sides, or, where the flow was more rapid, the stream was pied with spots of white froth, which rode on in undisturbed se-

renity. On the high-road the dead and dry carcasses of leaves tapped the ground as they bowled along helter-skelter upon the shoulders of the wind, and little birds in the hedges were rustling their feathers and tucking themselves in comfortably for the night, retaining their places if Oak kept moving, but flying away if he stopped to look at them. He passed through a wood where the game-birds were rising to their roosts, and heard the crack-voiced cock-pheasants' "cu-uck, cuck," and the wheezy whistle of the hens.

By the time he had walked three or four miles, every shape on the landscape had assumed a uniform hue of blackness. He ascended a hill and could just discern ahead of him a waggon, drawn up under a great overhanging tree on the roadside.

On coming close, he found there were no horses attached to it, the spot being apparently quite deserted. The waggon, from its position, seemed to have been left there for the night, for beyond about half a truss of hay which was heaped in the bottom, it was quite empty. Gabriel sat down on the shafts of the vehicle and considered his position. He calculated that he had walked a very fair proportion of the journey; and having been on foot since daybreak, he felt tempted to lie down upon the hay in the waggon instead of pushing on to the village of Weatherbury, and having to pay for a lodging.

Eating his last slices of bread and ham, and drinking from the bottle of cider he had taken the precaution to bring with him, he got into the lonely waggon. Here he spread half of the hay as a bed, and, as well as he could in the darkness, pulled the other half over him by way of bed-clothes, covering himself entirely, and feeling, physically, as comfortable as ever he had been in his life. Inward melancholy it was impossible for a man like Oak, introspective far beyond his neighbours, to banish quite, whilst conning the present untoward page of his history. So, thinking of his misfortunes, amorous and pastoral, he fell asleep, shepherds enjoying, in common with sailors, the privilege of being able to summon the god instead of having to wait for him.

On somewhat suddenly awaking, after a sleep of whose length he had no idea, Oak found that the waggon was in motion. He was being carried along the road at a rate rather considerable for a vehicle without springs, and under circumstances of physical uneasiness, his



head being dandled up and down on the bed of the waggon like a kettledrum-stick. He then distinguished voices in conversation, coming from the forepart of the waggon. His concern at this dilemma (which would have been alarm, had he been a thriving man; but misfortune is a fine opiate to personal terror) led him to peer cautiously from the hay, and the first sight he beheld were the stars above him. Charles's Wain was getting towards a right angle with the Pole Star, and Gabriel concluded that it must be about nine o'clock — in other words, that he had slept two hours. This small astronomical calculation was made without any positive effort, and whilst he was stealthily turning to discover, if possible, into whose hands he had fallen.

Two figures were dimly visible in front, sitting with their legs outside the waggon, one of whom was driving. Gabriel soon found that this was the waggoner, and it appeared they had come from Casterbridge fair, like himself.

A conversation was in progress, which continued thus: —

"Be as 'twill, she's a fine handsome body as far's looks be concerned. But that's only the skin of the woman, and these dandy cattle be as proud as a Lucifer in their insides."

"Ay — so 'a seem, Billy Smallbury — so 'a seem." This utterance was very shaky by nature, and more so by circumstance, the jolting of the waggon not being without its effect upon the speaker's larynx. It came from the man who held the reins.

"She's a very vain feymell — so 'tis said here and there."

"Ah, now. If so be 'tis like that, I can't look her in the face. Lord, no: not I — heh-heh-heh! Such a shy man as I be!"

"Yes — she's very vain. 'Tis said that every night at going to bed she looks in the glass to put on her nightcap properly."

"And not a married woman. Oh, the world!"

"And 'a can play the peanner, so 'tis said. Can play so clever that 'a can make a psalm tune sound as well as the merriest loose song a man can wish for."

"D'ye tell o't! A happy mercy for us, and I feel quite unspeakable! And how do she pay?"

"That I don't know, Master Poor-grass."

On hearing these and other similar remarks, a wild thought flashed into Gabriel's mind that they might be speaking

of Bathsheba. There were, however, no grounds for retaining such a supposition, for the waggon, though going in the direction of Weatherbury, might be going beyond it, and the woman alluded to seemed to be the mistress of some estate. They were now apparently close upon Weatherbury, and not to alarm the speakers unnecessarily, Gabriel slipped out of the waggon unseen.

He turned to an opening in the hedge, which he found to be a stile, and mounting thereon, he sat meditating whether to seek a cheap lodging in the village, or to ensure a cheaper one by lying under some hay or cornstack. The crunching jangle of the waggon died upon his ear. He was about to walk on, when he noticed on his left hand an unusual light — appearing about half a mile distant. Oak watched it, and the glow increased. Something was on fire.

Gabriel again mounted the stile, and, leaping down on the other side upon what he found to be ploughed soil, made across the field in the exact direction of the fire. The blaze, enlarging in a double ratio by his approach and its own increase, showed him as he drew nearer the outlines of ricks beside it, lighted up to great distinctness. A rickyard was the source of the fire. His weary face now began to be painted over with a rich orange glow, and the whole front of his smock-frock and gaiters was covered with a dancing shadow-pattern of thorn-twigs — the light reaching him through a leafless intervening hedge — and the metallic curve of his sheep-crook shone silver-bright in the same abounding rays. He came up to the boundary fence, and stood to regain breath. It seemed as if the spot was unoccupied by a living soul.

The fire was issuing from a long straw-stack, which was so far gone as to preclude a possibility of saving it. A rick burns differently from a house. As the wind blows the fire inwards, the portion in flames completely disappears like melting sugar, and the outline is lost to the eye. However, a hay or a wheat-rick, well put together, will resist combustion for a length of time, if it begins on the outside.

This before Gabriel's eyes was a rick of straw, loosely put together, and the flames darted into it with lightning swiftness. It glowed on the windward side, rising and falling in intensity, like the coal of a cigar. Then a superincumbent bundle rolled down, with a whisking noise, flames elongated, and bent them-

selves about, with a quiet roar, but no crackle. Banks of smoke went off horizontally at the back like passing clouds, and behind these burned hidden pyres, illuminating the semi-transparent sheet of smoke to a lustrous yellow uniformity. Individual straws in the foreground were consumed in a creeping movement of ruddy heat, as if they were knots of red worms, and above shone imaginary fiery faces, tongues hanging from lips, glaring eyes, and other impish forms, from which at intervals sparks flew in clusters like birds from a nest.

Oak suddenly ceased from being a mere spectator by discovering the case to be more serious than he had at first imagined. A scroll of smoke blew aside and revealed to him a wheat-rick in startling juxtaposition with the decaying one, and behind this a series of others, composing the main corn produce of the farm; so that instead of the straw-stack standing, as he had imagined, comparatively isolated, there was a regular connection between it and the remaining stacks of the group.

Gabriel leapt over the hedge, and saw that he was not alone. The first man he came to was running about in a great hurry, as if his thoughts were several yards in advance of his body, which they could never drag on fast enough.

"Oh, man—fire, fire! A good master and a bad servant is fire, fire!—I mane a bad servant and a good master. Oh, Mark Clark—come! And you, Billy Smallbury—and you, Maryann Money—and you, Joseph Poorgrass, and Matthew there, for his mercy endureth forever!" Other figures now appeared behind this shouting man and among the smoke, and Gabriel found that, far from being alone, he was in a great company—whose shadows danced merrily up and down, timed by the jigging of the flames, and not at all by their owners' movements. The assemblage—belonging to that class of society which casts its thoughts into the form of feeling, and its feelings into the form of commotion—set to work with a remarkable confusion of purpose.

"Stop the draught under the wheat-rick!" cried Gabriel to those nearest to him. The corn stood on stone staddles, and between these, tongues of yellow hues from the burning straw licked and darted playfully. If the fire once got *under* this stack, all would be lost.

"Get a tarpaulin—quick!" said Gabriel.

A rick-cloth was brought, and they hung it like a curtain across the channel. The flames immediately ceased to go under the bottom of the corn-stack, and stood up vertical.

"Stand here with a bucket of water and keep the cloth wet," said Gabriel again.

The flames, now driven upwards, began to attack the angles of the huge roof covering the wheat-stack.

"A ladder," cried Gabriel.

"The ladder was against the straw-rick and is burnt to a cinder," said a spectre-like form in the smoke.

Oak seized the cut ends of the sheaves, as if he were going to engage in the operation of "reed-drawing," and digging in his feet, and occasionally sticking in the stem of his sheep-crook, he clambered up the beetling face. He at once sat astride the very apex, and began with his crook to beat off the fiery fragments which had lodged thereon, shouting to the others to get him a bough and a ladder, and some water.

Billy Smallbury—one of the men who had been on the waggon—by this time had found a ladder, which Mark Clark ascended, holding on beside Oak upon the thatch. The smoke at this corner was stifling, and Clark, a nimble fellow, having been handed a bucket of water, bathed Oak's face and sprinkled him generally, whilst Gabriel, now with a long beech-bough in one hand, in addition to his crook in the other, kept sweeping the stack and dislodging all fiery particles.

On the ground the groups of villagers were still occupied in doing all they could to keep down the conflagration, which was not much. They were all tinged orange, and backed up by shadows as tall as fir-trees. Round the corner of the largest stack, out of the direct rays of the fire, stood a pony, bearing a young woman on its back. By her side was another female on foot. These two seemed to keep at a distance from the fire, that the horse might not become restive.

"He's a shepherd," said the woman on foot. "Yes—he is. See how his crook shines as he beats the rick with it. And his smock-frock is burnt in two holes, I declare! A fine young shepherd he is too, ma'am."

"Whose shepherd is he?" said the equestrian in a clear voice.

"Don't know, ma'am."

"Don't any of the others know?"

"Nobody at all — I've asked 'em. Quite a stranger, they say."

The young woman on the pony rode out from the shade and looked anxiously around.

"Do you think the barn is safe?" she said.

"D'ye think the barn is safe, Jan Coggan?" said the second woman, passing on the question to the nearest man in that direction.

"Safe now — leastwise I think so. If this rick had gone the barn would have followed. 'Tis that bold shepherd up there that have done the most good — he sitting on the top o' rick, whizzing his great long arms about like a windmill."

"He does work hard," said the young woman on horseback, looking up at Gabriel through her thick woollen veil. "I wish he was shepherd here. Don't any of you know his name?"

"Never heard the man's name in my life, or seed his form afore."

The fire began to get worsted, and Gabriel's elevated position being no longer required of him, he made as if to descend.

"Maryann," said the girl on horseback, "go to him as he comes down, and say that the farmer wishes to thank him for the great service he has done."

Maryann stalked off towards the rick and met Oak at the foot of the ladder. She delivered her message.

"Where is your master the farmer?" asked Gabriel, kindling with the idea of getting employment that seemed to strike him now.

"Tisn't a master; 'tis a mistress, shepherd."

"A woman farmer?"

"Ay, 'a b'lieve, and a rich one too!" said a bystander. "Lately 'a come here from a distance. Took on her uncle's farm, who died suddenly. Used to measure his money in half-pint cups. They say now that she've business in every bank in Casterbridge, and thinks no more of playing pitch-and-toss-sovereign than you and I do pitch-halfpenny — not a bit in the world, shepherd."

"That's she back there upon the pony," said Maryann; "wi' her face a covered up in a cloth with holes in it."

Oak, his features black, grimy, and undiscoverable from the smoke and heat, his smock-frock burnt into holes, dripping with water, the ash-stem of his sheep-crook charred six inches shorter than it had been, advanced with the humility stern adversity had thrust upon

him up to the slight female form in the saddle. He lifted his hat with respect, and not without gallantry: stepping close to her hanging feet, he said in a hesitating voice —

"Do you happen to want a shepherd, ma'am?"

She lifted the Shetland veil tied round her face, and looked all astonishment. Gabriel and his cold-hearted darling, Bathsheba Everdene, were face to face.

Bathsheba did not speak, and he mechanically repeated in an abashed and sad voice,

"Do you want a shepherd, ma'am?"

## CHAPTER VII.

### RECOGNITION: A TIMID GIRL.

BATHSHEBA withdrew into the shade. She scarcely knew whether most to be amused at the singularity of the meeting, or to be concerned at its awkwardness. There was room for a little pity, also for a very little exultation; the former at his position, the latter at her own. Embarrassed she was not, and she remembered Gabriel's declaration of love to her at Norcombe only to think she had nearly forgotten it.

"Yes," she murmured, putting on an air of dignity, and turning again to him with a little warmth of cheek, "I do want a shepherd. But —"

"He's the very man, ma'am," said one of the villagers, quietly.

Conviction breeds conviction. "Ay, that 'a is," said a second, decisively.

"The man, truly!" said a third, with heartiness.

"He's all there!" said number four, fervidly.

"Then will you tell him to speak to the bailiff," said Bathsheba.

All was practical again now. A summer eve and loneliness would have been necessary to give the meeting its proper fulness of romance.

The bailiff was pointed out to Gabriel, who, checking the palpitation within his breast at discovering that this Ashtereth of strange report was only a modification of Venus the well-known and admired, retired with him to talk over the necessary preliminaries of hiring.

The fire before them wasted away. "Men," said Bathsheba, "you shall take a little refreshment after this extra work. Will you come to the house?"

"We could knock in a bit and a drop a good deal freer, Miss, if so be ye'd send

it to Warren's Malthouse," replied the spokesman.

Bathsheba then rode off into the darkness, and the men straggled on to the village in twos and threes — Oak and the bailiff being left by the rick alone.

"And now," said the bailiff, finally, "all is settled, I think, about yer coming, and I am going home-along. Good-night to ye, shepherd."

"Can you get me a lodging?" inquired Gabriel.

"That I can't, indeed," he said, moving past Oak as a Christian edges past an offertory-plate when he does not mean to contribute. "If you follow on the road till you come to Warren's Malthouse, where they are all gone to have their snap of victuals, I dare say some of 'em will tell you of a place. Good-night to ye, shepherd."

The bailiff, who showed this nervous dread of loving his neighbours as himself, went up the hill, and Oak walked on to the village, still astonished at the rencontre with Bathsheba, glad of his nearness to her, and perplexed at the rapidity with which the unpractised girl of Norcombe had developed into the supervising and cool woman here. But some women only require an emergency to make them fit for one.

Obliged, to some extent, to forego dreaming in order to find the way, he reached the churchyard, and passed round it under the wall where several old chestnuts grew. There was a wide margin of grass along here, and Gabriel's footsteps were deadened by its softness, even at this indurating period of the year. When abreast of a trunk which appeared to be the oldest of the old, he became aware that a figure was standing behind it on the other side. Gabriel did not pause in his walk, and in another moment he accidentally kicked a loose stone. The noise was enough to disturb the motionless stranger, who started and assumed a careless position.

It was a slim girl, rather thinly clad.

"Good-night to you," said Gabriel, heartily.

"Good-night," said the girl to Gabriel.

The voice was unexpectedly attractive; it was the low and dulcet note suggestive of romance; common in descriptions, rare in experience.

"I'll thank you to tell me if I'm in the way for Warren's Malthouse?" Gabriel resumed, primarily to gain the information, indirectly to get more of the music.

"Quite right. It's at the bottom of

the hill. And do you know —" The girl hesitated, and then went on again. "Do you know how late they keep open the 'Buck's Head Inn'?" She seemed to be won by Gabriel's heartiness, as Gabriel had been won by her modulations.

"I don't know where the 'Buck's Head' is, or anything about it. Do you think of going there to-night?"

"Yes —" The female again paused.

There was no necessity for any continuance of speech, and the fact that she did add more seemed to proceed from an unconscious desire to show unconcern by making a remark, which is noticeable in the ingenious when they are acting by stealth. "You are not a Weatherbury man?" she said, timorously.

"I am not. I am the new shepherd — just arrived."

"Only a shepherd — and you seem almost a farmer by your ways."

"Only a shepherd," Gabriel repeated, in a dull cadence of finality. His thoughts were directed to the past, his eyes to the feet of the girl, and for the first time he saw lying there a bundle of some sort. She may have perceived the direction of his face, for she said coaxingly:

"You won't say anything in the parish about having seen me here, will you — at least, not for a day or two?"

"I won't if you wish me not to," said Oak.

"Thank you, indeed," the other replied. "I am rather poor, and I don't want people to know anything about me." Then she was silent, and shivered.

"You ought to have a cloak on such a cold night," Gabriel observed. "I would advise you to get indoors."

"Oh, no! Would you mind going on and leaving me? I thank you much for what you have told me."

"I will go on," he said; adding hesitatingly — "Since you are not very well off, perhaps you would accept this trifle from me. It is only a shilling, but it is all I have to spare."

"Yes, I will take it," said the stranger, gratefully.

She extended her hand; Gabriel his. In feeling for each other's palms in the gloom before the money could be passed, a minute incident occurred which told much. Gabriel's fingers alighted on the young woman's wrist. It was beating with a throb of tragic intensity. He had frequently felt the same quick, hard beat in the femoral artery of his lambs when overdriven. It suggested a consumption

too great of a vitality which, to judge from her figure and stature, was already too little.

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing."

"But there is?"

"No, no, no! Let your having seen me be a secret!"

"Very well; I will. Good-night, again."

"Good-night."

The young girl remained motionless by the tree and Gabriel descended into the village. He fancied that he had felt himself in the penumbra of a very deep sadness when touching that slight and fragile creature. But wisdom lies in moderating mere impressions, and Gabriel endeavoured to think little of this.

# CHAPTER VIII.

## THE MALTHOUSE: THE CHAT: NEWS.

WARREN'S Malthouse was enclosed by an old wall enwrapped with ivy, and though not much of the exterior was visible at this hour, the character and purposes of the building were clearly enough shown by its outline upon the sky. From the walls an overhanging thatched roof sloped up to a point in the centre, upon which rose a small wooden lantern, fitted with louvre-boards on all the four sides, and from these openings a mist was dimly perceived to be escaping into the night air. There was no window in front; but a square hole in the door was glazed with a single pane, through which red comfortable rays now stretched out upon the ivied wall in front. Voices were to be heard inside.

Oak's hand skimmed the surface of the door with fingers extended to an Elymas-the-Sorcerer pattern, till he found a leathern strap, which he pulled. This lifted a wooden latch, and the door swung open.

The room inside was lighted only by the ruddy glow from the kiln mouth, which shone over the floor with the streaming horizontality of the setting sun, and threw upwards the shadows of all facial irregularities in those assembled around, with the effect of the footlights upon the features of her Majesty's servants when they approach too near the front. The stone-flag floor was worn into a path from the doorway to the kiln, and into undulations everywhere. A curved settle of unplanned oak stretched along one side, and in a remote corner was a small bed and bedstead, the owner

and frequent occupier of which was the maltster.

This aged man was now sitting opposite the fire, his frosty white hair and beard overgrowing his gnarled figure like the grey moss and lichen upon a leafless apple-tree. He wore breeches and the laced-up shoes called ankle-jacks; he kept his eyes fixed upon the fire.

Gabriel's nose was greeted by an atmosphere laden with the sweet smell of new malt. The conversation (which seemed to have been concerning the origin of the fire) immediately ceased, and every one ocularly criticised him to the degree expressed by contracting the flesh of their foreheads and looking at him with narrowed eyelids, as if he had been a light too strong for their sight. Several exclaimed meditatively, after this operation had been completed:

"Oh, 'tis the new shepherd, a' b'lieve."

"We thought we heard a hand pawing about the door for the hobbin, but weren't sure 'twere not a dead leaf blowed across," said another. "Come in, shepherd; sure ye be welcome, though we don't know yer name."

"Gabriel Oak, that's my name, neighbours."

The ancient maltster sitting in the midst turned at this—his turning being as the turning of a rusty crane.

"That's never Gable Oak's grandson over at Norcombe—never!" he said, as a formula expressive of surprise, which nobody was supposed for a moment to take literally.

"My father and my grandfather were old men of the name of Gabriel," said the shepherd, placidly.

"Thought I knowed the man's face as I seed him on the rick!—thought I did! And where be ye trading o't to now, shepherd?"

"I'm thinking of biding here," said Mr. Oak.

"Knowed yer grandfather for years and years!" continued the maltster, the words coming forth of their own accord as if the momentum previously imparted had been sufficient.

"Ah—and did you!"

"Knowed yer grandmother."

"And her too!"

"Likewise knowed yer father when he was a child. Why, my boy Jacob there and your father were sworn brothers—that they were sure—weren't ye, Jacob?"

"Ay, sure," said his son, a young man about sixty-five, with a semi-bald head



and one tooth in the left centre of his upper jaw, which made much of itself by standing prominent, like a milestone in a bank. "But 'twas Joe had most to do with him. However, my son William must have knowed the very man afore us — didn't ye, Billy, afore ye left Norcombe?"

"No, 'twas Andrew," said Jacob's son Billy, a child of forty, or thereabouts, who manifested the peculiarity of possessing a cheerful soul in a gloomy body, and whose whiskers were assuming a chin-chilla shade here and there.

"I remember Andrew," said Oak, "as being a man in the place when I was quite a child."

"Ay — the other day I and my youngest daughter Liddy were over at my grandson's christening," continued Billy. "We were talking about this very family, and 'twas only last Purification Day in this very world, when the use-money is gied away to the second-best poor folk, you know, shepherd, and I can mind the day because they all had to trappse up to the Vestry — yes, this very man's family."

"Come, shepherd, and drink. 'Tis gape and swaller with us — a drap of sommit, but not of much account," said the maltster, removing from the fire his eyes, which were vermilion-red and bleared by gazing into it for so many years. "Take up the God-forgive-me, Jacob. See if 'tis warm, Jacob."

Jacob stooped to the God-forgive-me, which was a two-handed tall mug standing in the ashes, cracked and charred with heat, rather furred with extraneous matter about the outside, especially in the crevices of the handles, the innermost curves of which may not have seen daylight for several years by reason of this encrustation thereon — formed of ashes accidentally wetted with cider and baked hard; but to the mind of any sensible drinker the cup was no worse for that, being incontestably clean on the inside and about the rim. It may be observed that such a class of mug is called a God-forgive-me in Weatherbury and its vicinity for uncertain reasons; probably because its size makes any given toper feel ashamed of himself when he sees its bottom in drinking it empty: this idea is, however, a mere guess.

Jacob, on receiving the order to see if the liquor was warm enough, placidly dipped his forefinger into it by way of thermometer, and having pronounced it nearly of the proper degree, raised the

cup and very civilly attempted to dust some of the ashes from the bottom with the skirt of his smock-frock, because Shepherd Oak was a stranger.

"A clane cup for the shepherd," said the maltster commandingly.

"No — not at all," said Gabriel, in a reproving tone of considerateness. "I never fuss about dirt in its natural state, and when I know what sort it is." Taking the mug he drank an inch or more from the depth of its contents, and duly passed it to the next man. "I wouldn't think of giving such trouble to neighbours in washing up when there's so much work to be done in the world already," continued Oak, in a moister tone, after recovering from the stoppage of breath ever occasioned by proper pulls at large mugs.

"A right sensible man," said Jacob.

"True, true, as the old woman said," observed a brisk young man — Mark Clark by name, a genial and pleasant gentleman, whom to meet anywhere in your travels was to know, to know was to drink with, and to drink with was, unfortunately, to pay for.

"And here's a mouthful of bread and bacon that mis'ess have sent, shepherd. The cider will go down better with a bit of victuals. Don't ye chaw quite close, shepherd, for I let the bacon fall in the road outside as I was bringing it along, and may be 'tis rather gritty. There, 'tis clane dirt; and we all know what that is as you say, and you baint a particular man we see, shepherd."

"True, true — not at all," said the friendly Oak.

"Don't let yer teeth quite meet, and you won't feel the sandiness at all. Ah! 'tis wonderful what can be done by contrivance!"

"My own mind exactly, neighbour."

"Ah, he's his grandfer's own grandson! — his grandfer were just such a nice unparticular man!" said the maltster.

"Drink, Henry Fray — drink," magnanimously said Jan Coggan, a person who held Saint-Simonian notions of share and share alike where liquor was concerned, as the vessel showed signs of approaching him in its gradual revolution among them.

Having at this moment reached the end of a wistful gaze into mid-air, Henry did not refuse. He was a man of more than middle age, with eyebrows high up in his forehead, who laid it down that the law of the world was bad, with a long-suffering look through his listeners at the world alluded to, as it presented itself to



his imagination. He always signed his name "Henery" — strenuously insisting upon that spelling, and if any passing schoolmaster ventured to remark that the second "e" was superfluous and old-fashioned, he received the reply that "H-e-n-e-r-y" was the name he was christened and the name he would stick to — in the tone of one to whom orthographical differences were matters which had a great deal to do with personal character.

Mr. Jan Coggan, who had passed the cup to Henery, was a crimson man with a spacious countenance, and private glimmer in his eye, whose name had appeared on the marriage register of Weatherbury and neighbouring parishes as best man and chief witness in countless unions of the previous twenty years; he also very frequently filled the post of head godfather in baptisms of the subtly-jovial kind.

"Come, Mark Clark — come. There's plenty more in the barrel," said Jan.

"Ay — that I will, as the doctor said," replied Mr. Clark, who, twenty years younger than Jan Coggan, revolved in the same orbit. He secreted mirth on all occasions for special discharge at popular parties — his productions of this class being more noticeably advanced than Coggan's, inflicting a faint sense of reduplication and similitude upon the elder members of such companies.

"Why, Joseph Poorgrass, ye ha'n't had a drop!" said Mr. Coggan to a very shrinking man in the background, thrusting the cup towards him.

"Such a shy man as he is!" said Jacob Smallbury. "Why, ye've hardly had strength of eye enough to look in our young mis'ess's face, so I hear, Joseph?"

All looked at Joseph Poorgrass with pitying reproach.

"No — I've hardly looked at her at all," faltered Joseph, reducing his body smaller whilst talking, apparently from a meek sense of undue prominence. "And when I seed her, 'twas nothing but blushes with me!"

"Poor feller," said Mr. Clark.

"'Tis a curious nature for a man," said Jan Coggan.

"Yes," continued Joseph Poorgrass — his shyness, which was so painful as a defect, just beginning to fill him with a little complacency now that it was regarded in the light of an interesting study. "'Twere blush, blush, blush with me every minute of the time, when she was speaking to me."

"I believe ye, Joseph Poorgrass, for we all know ye to be a very bashful man."

"'Tis terrible bad for a man, poor soul," said the maltster. "And how long have ye suffered from it, Joseph?"

"Oh, ever since I was a boy. Yes — mother was concerned to her heart about it — yes. But 'twas all nought."

"Did ye ever take anything to try and stop it, Joseph Poorgrass?"

"Oh ay, tried all sorts. They took me to Greenhill Fair, and into a grate large jerry-go-nimble show, where there were women-folk riding round — standing upon horses, with hardly anything on but their smocks, but it didn't cure me a morsel — no, not a morsel. And then I was put errand-man at the Woman's Skittle Alley at the back of the 'Tailor's Arms' in Casterbridge. 'Twas a horrible gross situation, and altogether a very curious place for a good man. I had to stand and look wicked people in the face from morning till night; but 'twas no use — I was just as bad as ever after all. Blushes hev been in the family for generations. There, 'tis a happy providence that I be no worse, so to speak it — yes, a happy thing, and I feel my few poor gratuities."

"True," said Jacob Smallbury, deepening his thoughts to a profounder view of the subject. "'Tis a thought to look at, that ye might have been worse, but even as you be, 'tis a very bad affliction for ye, Joseph. For ye see, shepherd, though 'tis very well for a woman, dang it all, 'tis awkward for a man like him, poor feller." He appealed to the shepherd by a heart-felling glance.

"'Tis — 'tis," said Gabriel, recovering from a meditation as to whether the saving to a man's soul in the run of a twelve-month by saying "dang" instead of what it stood for, made it worth while to use the word. "Yes, very awkward for the man."

"Ay, and he's very timid, too," observed Jan Coggan. "Once he had been working late at Windleton, and had had a drap of drink, and lost his way as he was coming home-along through Yalbury Wood, didn't ye, Master Poorgrass?"

"No, no, no; not that story!" expostulated the modest man, forcing a laugh to bury his concern, and forcing out too much for the purpose — laughing over the greater part of his skin, round to his ears, and up among his hair, insomuch that Shepherd Oak, who was rather sensitive himself, was surfeited, and felt he would never adopt that plan for hiding trepidation any more.

"—And so 'a lost himself quite," continued Mr. Coggan, with an impassive face, implying that a true narrative, like time and tide, must run its course and would wait for no man. "And as he was coming along in the middle of the night, much afeard, and not able to find his way out of the trees, somehow, 'a cried out, 'Man-a-lost! man-a-lost!' A owl in a tree happened to be crying 'Whoo-whoo-whoo!' as owls do you know, shepherd" (Gabriel nodded), "and Joseph, all in a tremble, said 'Joseph Poorgrass, of Weatherbury, sir!'"

"No, no, now—that's too much!" said the timid man, becoming a man of brazen courage all of a sudden. "I didn't say *sir*. I'll take my oath I didn't say 'Joseph Poorgrass o' Weatherbury, *sir*.' No, no; what's right is right, and I never said *sir* to the bird, knowing very well that no person of a gentleman's rank would be hollering there at that time o' night. 'Joseph Poorgrass of Weatherbury,'—that's every word I said, and I shouldn't ha' said that if 't hadn't been for Keeper Day's metheglin. . . . There, 'twas a merciful thing it ended where it did, as I may say," continued Joseph, swallowing his breath in content.

The question of which was right being tacitly waived by the company, Jan went on meditatively:

"And he's the fearfulest man, bain't ye, Joseph? Ay, another time you were lost by Lambing-Down Gate, weren't ye, Joseph?"

"I was," replied Poorgrass, as if there were some matters too serious even for modesty to remember itself under, and this was one.

"Yes; that were the middle of the night, too. The gate would not open, try how he would, and knowing there was the Devil's hand in it, he kneeled down."

"Ay," said Joseph, acquiring confidence from the warmth of the fire, the cider, and a growing perception of the narrative capabilities of the experience alluded to. "My heart died within me, that time; but I kneeled down and said the Lord's Prayer, and then the Belief right through, and then the Ten Commandments, in earnest prayer. But no, the gate wouldn't open; and then I went on with Dearly Beloved Brethren, and, thinks I, this makes four, and 'tis all I know out of book, and if this don't do it nothing will, and I'm a lost man. Well, when I got to Saying After Me, I rose from my knees and found the gate would

open—yes, neighbours, the gate opened the same as ever."

A meditation on the obvious inference was indulged in by all, and during its continuance each directed his vision into the ashpit, which glowed like a desert in the tropics under a vertical sun, shaping their eyes long and liny, partly because of the light, partly from the depth of the subject discussed—each man severally drawing upon the tablet of his imagination a clear and correct picture of Joseph Poorgrass under the remarkable conditions he had related, and surveying the position in all its bearings with critical exactness.

Gabriel broke the silence. "What sort of a place is this to live at, and what sort of a mis'ess is she to work under?" Gabriel's bosom thrilled gently as he thus slipped under the notice of the assembly the innermost subject of his heart.

"We d' know little of her—nothing. She only showed herself a few days ago. Her uncle was took bad, and the doctor was called with his world-wide skill; but he couldn't save the man. As I take it, she's going to keep on the farm."

"That's about the shape o't, 'a b'lieve," said Jan Coggan. "Ay, 'tis a very good family. I'd as soon be under 'em as under one here and there. Her uncle was a very fair sort of man. Did ye know en, shepherd—a bachelor-man?"

"Not at all."

The inquirer paused a moment, and then continued his relation, which, as did every remark he made, instead of being casual, seemed the result of a slow convergence of forces that had commenced their operation in times far remote.

"I used to go to his house a-courting my first wife, Charlotte, who was his dairymaid. Well, a very good-hearted man were Farmer Everdene, and I being a respectable young fellow was allowed to call and see her and drink as much ale as I liked, but not to carry away any—outside my skin I mane, of course."

"Ay, ay, Jan Coggan; we know yer maning."

"And so you see 'twas beautiful ale, and I wished to value his kindness as much as I could, and not to be so ill-mannered as to drink only a thimbleful, which would have been insulting the man's generosity—"

"True, Master Coggan, 'twould so," corroborated Mark Clark.

"—And so I used to eat a lot of salt afore going, and then by the time I got there I were as dry as a lime-basket—so

thorough dry that that ale would slip down — ah, 'twould slip down sweet! Happy times! heavenly times! Ay, 'twere like drinking blessedness itself. Pints and pints! Such lovely drunks as I used to have at that house. You can mind, Jacob? You used to go wi' me sometimes."

"I can — I can," said Jacob. "That one, too, that we had at 'Buck's Head,' on a White Monday was a pretty tippie — a very pretty tippie, indeed."

"'Twas. But for a drunk of really a noble class and on the highest principles, that brought you no nearer to the dark man than you were afore you begun, there was none like those in Farmer Everdene's kitchen. Not a single damn allowed; no, not a bare poor one, even at the most cheerful moment when all were blindest, though the good old word of sin thrown in here and there would have been a great relief to a merry soul."

"True," said the maltster. "Nature requires her swearing at the regular times, or she's not herself; and unholy exclamations is a necessity of life."

"But Charlotte," continued Coggan — "not a word of the sort would Charlotte allow, nor the smallest item of taking in vain. . . . Ay, poor Charlotte, I wonder if she had the good fortune to get into Heaven when 'a died! But 'a was never much in luck's way, and perhaps 'a went downwards after all, poor soul."

"And did any of you know Miss Everdene's father and mother?" inquired the shepherd, who found some difficulty in keeping the conversation in the desired channel.

"I knew them a little," said Jacob Smallbury; "but they were townsfolk, and didn't live here. They've been dead for years. Father, what sort of people were mis'ess' father and mother?"

"Well," said the maltster, "he wasn't much to look at; but she was a lovely woman. He was fond enough of her as his sweetheart."

"Used to kiss her in scores and long-hundreds, so 'twas said here and there," observed Coggan.

"He was very proud of her, too, when they were married, as I've been told," said the maltster.

"Ay," said Coggan. "He admired his wife so much, that he used to light the candle three times every night to look at her."

"Boundless love; I shouldn't have supposed it in the world's universe!" murmured Joseph Poorgrass, who habitu-

ally spoke on a large scale in his moral reflections.

"Well, to be sure," said Gabriel.

"Oh, 'tis true enough. I knowed the man and woman both well. Levi Everdene — that was the man's name, sure enough. 'Man,' saith I in my hurry, but he were of a higher circle of life than that — 'a was a gentleman-tailor really, worth scores of pounds. And he became a very celebrated bankrupt two, or three times."

"Oh, I thought he was quite a common man!" said Joseph.

"Oh, no, no! That man failed for heaps of money; hundreds in gold and silver."

The maltster being rather short of breath, Mr. Coggan, after absently scrutinizing a coal which had fallen among the ashes, took up the narrative, with a private twirl of his eye:

"Well, now, you'd hardly believe it, but that man — our Miss Everdene's father — was one of the ficklest husbands alive, after a while. Understand, 'a didn't want to be fickle, but he couldn't help it. The pore feller were faithful and true enough to her in his wish, but his heart would rove, do what he would. Ay, 'a spoke to me in real tribulation about it once. 'Coggan,' he said, 'I could never wish for a handsomer woman than I've got, but feeling she's ticketed as my lawful wife, I can't help my wicked heart wandering, do what I will.' But at last I believe he cured it by making her take off her wedding-ring and calling her by her maiden name as they sat together after the shop was shut, and so 'a would get to fancy she was only his sweetheart, and not married to him at all. And so as soon as he could thoroughly fancy he was doing wrong and committing the seventh, 'a got to like her as well as ever, and they lived on a perfect example of mutel love."

"Well, 'twas a most ungodly remedy," murmured Joseph Poorgrass, "but we ought to feel deep cheerfulness, as I may say, that a happy providence kept it from being any worse. You see, he might have gone the bad road and given his eyes to unlawfulness entirely — yes, gross unlawfulness, so to say it."

"You see," said Billy Smallbury, with testimonial emphasis, "the man's will was to do right, sure enough, but his heart didn't chime in."

"He got so much better, that he was quite religious in his later years, wasn't he, Jan?" said Joseph Poorgrass. "He got himself confirmed over again in a

more serious way, and took to saying, 'Amen' almost as loud as a clerk, and he liked to copy comforting verses from the tombstones. He used, too, to hold the holy money-plate at Let Your Light so Shine, and stand godfather to poor little come-by-chance children that had no father at all in the eye of matrimony, and he kept a missionary-box upon his table to nab folks unawares when they called; yes, and he would box the charity-boys' ears, if they laughed in church, till they could hardly stand upright, and do other deeds of piety common to the saintly inclined."

"Ay, at that time he thought of nothing but righteousness," added Billy Smallbury. "One day Parson Thirdly met him and said, 'Good-morning, Mister Everdene; 'tis a fine day!' 'Amen,' said Everdene, quite absent-like, thinking only of religion when he seed a parson. Yes, he was a very Christian man."

"His second-cousin, John, was the most religious of the family, however," said the old maltster. "None of the others were so pious as he, for they never went past us church people in their Christianity, but John's feelings grewed as strong as a Chapel member's. 'A was a watch and clock maker by trade and thought of nothing but godliness, poor man. 'I judge every clock according to his works,' he used to say when he were in his holy frame of mind. Ay, he likewise was a very Christian man."

"Their daughter was not at all a pretty chiel at that time," said Henery Fray. "Never should have thought she'd have growed up such a handsome body as she is."

"'Tis to be hoped her temper is as good as her face."

"Well, yes; but the baily will have most to do with the business and ourselves. Ah!" Henery shook his head, gazed into the ashpit, and smiled volumes of ironical knowledge.

"A queer Christian, as the D—— said of the owl," volunteered Mark Clark.

"He is," said Henery, with a manner implying that irony must necessarily cease at a certain point. "Between we two, man and man, I believe that man would as soon tell a lie Sundays as working-days, that I do so."

"Good faith, you do talk," said Gabriel, with apprehension.

"True enough," said the man of bitter moods, looking round upon the company, with the antithetic laughter that comes from a keener appreciation of the untold

miseries of life than ordinary men are capable of. "Ah, there's people of one sort, and people of another, but that man—bless your souls!"

The company suspended consideration of whether they wanted their souls blessed that moment, as the shortest way to the end of the story.

"I believe that if so be that Baily Pennyways' heart were put inside a nutshell, he'd rattle," continued Henery. "He'll strain for money as a salmon will strain for the river's head. 'Tis a thief and a robber, that's what 'tis."

Gabriel thought fit to change the subject. "You must be a very aged man, maltster, to have sons growed up so old and ancient," he remarked.

"Father's so old that 'a can't mind his age, can ye, father?" interposed Jacob. "And he's growed terrible crooked, too, lately," Jacob continued, surveying his father's figure, which was rather more bowed than his own. "Really, one may say that father there is three-double."

"Crooked folk will last a long while," said the maltster, grimly, and not in the best humour.

"Shepherd would like to hear the pedigree of yer life, father—wouldn't ye, shepherd?"

"Ay, that I should," said Gabriel, with the heartiness of a man who had longed to hear it for several months. "What may your age be, maltster?"

The maltster cleared his throat in an exaggerated form for emphasis, and elongating his gaze to the remotest point of the ashpit, said, in the slow speech justifiable when the importance of a subject is so generally felt that any mannerism must be tolerated in getting at it, "Well, I don't mind the year I were born in, but perhaps I can reckon up the places I've lived at, and so get it that way. I bode at Juddle Farm across there" (nodding to the north) "till I were eleven. I bode seven at Lower Twifford" (nodding to the east), "where I took to malting. I went therefrom to Norcombe, and malted there two-and-twenty years, and two-and-twenty years I was there turnip-hoeing and harvesting. Ah, I knowed that old place Norcombe years afore you were thought of, Master Oak" (Oak smiled a corroboration of the fact). "Then I malted at Snoodly-under-Drool four year, and four year turnip-hoeing; and I was fourteen times eleven months at Moreford St. Jude's" (nodding north-west-by north). "Old Twills wouldn't hire me for more than eleven months at a time,

to keep me from being chargeable to the parish if so be I was disabled. Then I was three year at Mellstock, and I've been here one-and-thirty year come Candelmas. How much is that?"

"Hundred and seventeen," chuckled another old gentleman, given to mental arithmetic and little conversation, who had hitherto sat unobserved in a corner.

"Well, then, that's my age," said the maltster, emphatically.

"Oh, no, father!" Jacob remonstrated. "Your turnip-hoeing were in the summer and your malting in the winter of the same years, and ye don't ought to count both halves, father."

"Chok' it all! I lived through the summers, didn't I? That's my question. I suppose ye'll say next I be no age at all to speak of?"

"Sure we shan't," said Gabriel, soothingly.

"Ye be a very old aged person, maltster," attested Jan Coggan, also soothingly. "We all know that, and ye must have a wonderful talented constitution to be able to live so long, mustn't he, neighbours?"

"True, true; ye must, maltster, a wonderful talented constitution," said the meeting, unanimously.

The maltster, being now pacified, was even generous enough to voluntarily disparage in a slight degree the virtue of having lived a great many years, by mentioning that the cup they were drinking out of was three years older than he.

While the cup was being examined, the end of Gabriel Oak's flute became visible over his smock-frock pocket, and Henery Fray exclaimed, "Surely, shepherd, I seed you blowing into a grate flute by-now at Casterbridge?"

"You did," said Gabriel, blushing faintly. "I've been in great trouble, neighbours, and was driven to it. I used not to be so poor as I be now."

"Never mind, heart!" said Mark Clark. "You should take it careless-like, shepherd, and your time will come. But we could thank ye for a tune, if ye bain't too tired?"

"Neither drum nor trumpet have I heard this Christmas," said Jan Coggan. "Come, raise a tune, Master Oak!"

"Ay, that I will," said Gabriel readily, pulling out his flute and putting it together. "A poor tool, neighbours; an everyday chap; but such as I can do ye shall have and welcome."

Oak then struck up "Jockey to the Fair," and played that sparkling melody

three times through, accenting the notes in the third round in a most artistic and lively manner by bending his body in small jerks and tapping with his foot to beat time.

"He can blow the flute very well—that 'a can," said a young married man, who having no individuality worth mentioning was known as "Susan Tall's husband." He continued admiringly. "I'd as lief as not be able to blow into a flute as well as that."

"He's a clever man, and 'tis a true comfort for us to have such a shepherd," murmured Joseph Poorgrass, in a soft and complacent cadence. "We ought to feel real thanksgiving that he's not a player of loose songs instead of these merry tunes; for 'twould have been just as easy for God to have made the shepherd a lewd low man—a man of iniquity, so to speak it—as what he is. Yes, for our wives' and daughters' sakes we should feel real thanksgiving."

"True, true, as the old woman said," dashed in Mark Clark conclusively, not feeling it to be of any consequence to his opinion that he had only heard about a word and three-quarters of what Joseph had said.

"Yes," added Joseph, beginning to feel like a man in the Bible; "for evil does thrive so in these times that ye may be as much deceived in the clanest shaved and whitest shirted man as in the raggedest tramp upon the turnpike, if I may term it so."

"Ay, I can mind yer face now, shepherd," said Henery Fray, criticising Gabriel with misty eyes as he entered upon his second tune. "Yes—now I see ye blowing into the flute I know ye to be the same man I see play at Casterbridge, for yer mouth were scrimped up and yer eyes a-staring out like a strangled man's—just as they be now."

"'Tis a pity that playing the flute should make a man look such a scarecrow," observed Mr. Mark Clark, with additional criticism of Gabriel's countenance, the latter person jerking out unconcernedly, with the ghastly grimace required by the instrument, the chorus of "Dame Durden:"—

'Twas Moll' and Bet', and Doll' and Kate'  
And Dor'-othy Drag'-gle Tail.

"I hope you don't mind that young man Mark Clark's bad manners in naming your features?" whispered Joseph to Gabriel privately.

"Not at all," said Mr. Oak.



"For by nature ye be a very handsome man, shepherd," continued Joseph Poorgrass, with winning suavity.

"Ay, that ye be, shepherd," said the company.

"Thank you very much," said Oak, in the modest tone good manners demanded, privately thinking, however, that he would never let Bathsheba see him playing the flute; in this resolve showing a discretion equal to that related of its sagacious inventress, the divine Minerva herself.

"Ah, when I and my wife were married at Norcombe Church," said the old maltster, not pleased at finding himself left out of the subject, "we were called the handsomest couple in the neighbourhood — everybody said so."

"Danged if ye bain't altered now, maltster," said a voice, with the vigour natural to the enunciation of a remarkably evident truism. It came from the old man in the background, whose general offensiveness and spiteful ways were barely atoned for by the occasional chuckle he contributed to general laughs.

"Oh, no, no," said Gabriel.

"Don't ye play no more, shepherd," said Susan Tall's husband, the young married man who had spoken once before. "I must be moving, and when there's tunes going on I seem as if hung in wires. If I thought after I'd left that music was still playing and I not there, I should be quite melancholy-like."

"What's yer hurry then, Laban?" inquired Coggan. "You used to bide as late as the latest."

"Well, ye see, neighbours, I was lately married to a woman, and she's my vocation now, and so ye see. . . ." The young man halted lamely.

"New lords new laws, as the saying is, I suppose," remarked Coggan, with a very compressed countenance; that the frigidity implied by this arrangement of facial muscles was not the true mood of his soul being only discernible from a private glimmer in the outer corner of one of his eyes — this eye being nearly closed, and the other only half open.

"Ay, 'a b'lieve — ha, ha!" said Susan Tall's husband, in a tone intended to imply his habitual reception of jokes without minding them at all. The young man then wished them good-night and withdrew.

Henery Fray was the first to follow. Then Gabriel arose and went off with Jan Coggan, who had offered him a lodging. A few minutes later, when the re-

maining ones were on their legs and about to depart, Fray came back again in a hurry. Flourishing his finger ominously he threw a gaze teeming with tidings just where his glance alighted by accident, which happened to be in Joseph Poorgrass's eye.

"Oh — what's the matter, what's the matter, Henery?" said Joseph, starting back.

"What's a-brewing, Henery?" asked Jacob and Mark Clark.

"Baily Pennyways — Baily Pennyways — I said so; yes, I said so."

"What, found out stealing any thing?"

"Stealing it is. The news is, that after Miss Everdene got home she went out again to see all was safe, as she usually do, and coming in found Baily Pennyways creeping down the granary steps with half a bushel of barley. She flew at him like a cat — never such a tom-boy as she is — of course I speak with closed doors?"

"You do — you do, Henery."

"She flew at him, and, to cut a long story short, he owned to having carried off five sack altogether, upon her promising not to persecute him. Well, he's turned out neck and crop, and my question is, who's going to be baily now?"

The question was such a profound one that Henery was obliged to drink there and then from the large cup till the bottom was distinctly visible inside. Before he had replaced it on the table, in came the young man, Susan Tall's husband, in a still greater hurry.

"Have ye heard the news that's all over parish?"

"About Baily Pennyways?"

"Ah — but besides that?"

"No — not a morsel of it!" they all replied, looking into the very midst of Laban Tall, and as it were, advancing their intelligence to meet his words half way down his throat.

"What a night of horrors!" murmured Joseph Poorgrass, waving his hands spasmodically. "I've had the news-bell ringing in my left ear quite bad enough for a murder, and I've seed a magpie all alone!"

"Fanny Robin — Miss Everdene's youngest servant — can't be found. They've been wanting to lock up the door these two hours, but she isn't come in. And they don't know what to do about going to bed for fear of locking her out. They wouldn't be so concerned if she hadn't been noticed in such low spirits these last few days, and Maryann

d' think the beginning of a crowner's inquest has happened to the poor girl."

"Oh — 'tis burned — 'tis burned!" said Joseph Poorgrass with dry lips.

"No — 'tis drowned!" said Tall.

"Or 'tis her father's razor!" suggested Billy Smallbury, with a vivid sense of detail.

"Well — Miss Everdene wants to speak to one or two of us before we go to bed. What with this trouble about the baily, and now about the girl, mis'ess is almost wild."

They all hastened up the rise to the farm-house, excepting the old maltster, whom neither news, fire, rain, nor thunder could draw from his hole. There, as the others' footsteps died away, he sat down again, and continued gazing as usual into the furnace with his red bleared eyes.

From the bedroom window above their heads Bathsheba's head and shoulders, robed in mystic white, were dimly seen extended into the air.

"Are any of my men among you?" she said anxiously.

"Yes, ma'am, several," said Susan Tall's husband.

"To-morrow morning I wish two or three of you to make inquiries in the villages round if they have seen such a person as Fanny Robin. Do it quietly; there is no reason for alarm as yet. She must have left whilst we were all at the fire."

"I beg yer pardon, but had she any young man courting her in the parish, ma'am?" asked Jacob Smallbury.

"I don't know," said Bathsheba.

"I've never heard of any such thing, ma'am," said two or three.

"It is hardly likely, either," continued Bathsheba. "For any lover of hers might have come to the house if he had been a respectable lad. The most mysterious matter connected with her absence — indeed, the only thing which gives me serious alarm — is that she was seen to go out of the house by Maryann with only her indoor working gown on — not even a bonnet."

"And you mean, ma'am, excusing my words, that a young woman would hardly go to see her young man without dressing up," said Jacob, turning his mental vision upon past experiences. "That's true — she would not, ma'am."

"She had, I think, a bundle, though I couldn't see very well," said a female voice from another window, which seemed to belong to Maryann. "But she had no young man about here. Hers lives in Casterbidge, and I believe he's a soldier."

"Do you know his name?" Bathsheba said.

"No, mistress; she was very close about it."

"Perhaps I might be able to find out if I went to Casterbridge barracks," said William Smallbury.

"Very well; if she doesn't return to-morrow, mind you go there and try to discover which man it is, and see him. I feel more responsible than I should if she had had any friends or relations alive. I do hope she has come to no harm through a man of that kind. . . . And then there's this disgraceful affair of the bailiff — but I can't speak of him now."

Bathsheba had so many reasons for uneasiness that it seemed she did not think it worth while to dwell upon any particular one. "Do as I told you, then," she said in conclusion, closing the casement.

"Ay, ay, mistress; we will," they replied, and moved away.

That night at Coggan's Gabriel Oak, beneath the screen of closed eyelids, was busy with fancies, and full of movement, like a river flowing rapidly under its ice. Night had always been the time at which he saw Bathsheba most vividly, and through the slow hours of shadow he tenderly regarded her image now. It is rarely that the pleasures of the imagination will compensate for the pain of sleeplessness, but they possibly did with Oak to-night, for the delight of merely seeing effaced for the time his perception of the great difference between seeing and possessing.

He also thought of plans for fetching his few utensils and books from Norcombe. *The Young Man's Best Companion*, *The Farrier's Sure Guide*, *The Veterinary Surgeon*, *Paradise Lost*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Ash's Dictionary*, and *Walkingame's Arithmetic*, constituted his library; and though a limited series, it was one from which he had acquired more sound information by diligent perusal than many a man of opportunities has done from a furlong of laden shelves.

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SPANISH LIFE AND CHARACTER IN THE  
INTERIOR, DURING THE SUMMER OF 1873.

## LETTER XI.

## THE DECAY OF FAITH IN SPAIN.

"My religion has broken down." Such was the hopeless sentiment,—a sentiment rendered doubly mournful by the simplicity of the language, and the position of the speaker,—expressed to me a few nights since by a poor Spanish boatman. It was uttered in answer to my question why he was absent from his cathedral, the bells of which had just been clanging for evening service.

"My religion has broken down !"

The train of thought which these bitter words led to, urged me to throw together into a connected form the many observations I had already jotted down, as to the state of religious feeling in Spain; and I could not help reflecting, as I turned over page after page of my journal, and came upon the entries relating to this especial subject, with how much truth might both the educated and uneducated Spaniard of to-day say, with the poor boatman, "My religion has broken down."

This self-imposed task is a dispiriting one. For I cannot, to be candid, write of the vitality and living work of the Church in my present country, but rather of its lifelessness and stagnation; not of the growth and progress of faith, but alas ! of its rapid and visible decay.

The Church of Spain—of Spain in 1873 (I write of what I have seen in the South and in the interior of Spain; in the north, I am told, ecclesiastical affairs wear a wholly different aspect), is an institution which has lost its hold on the masses, both educated and uneducated; they do not look to its shelter for the offering of prayers, nor to its pulpit for instruction, nor to its minister for support and comfort. In literature, in intercourse with strangers, in thought and education, all around has moved: the Church moves not; she is left behind in the onward march; too proud to ask, to follow, or to learn, she stands alone; too proud to acknowledge, or too much wrapped in sublime slumber and dreams of her past glory, to recognize for a moment the fact that she *is* alone.

She writes her commands still, but none are found to obey them: she proffers her advice, but her sons turn away unheeding. "We have heart and mind like you," they say; "we can think and act for ourselves. Away!" The picture

that rises upon one's mind when one sees the decrees of Mother Church slighted, ridiculed, or ignored, by her sons (though *not* by her pious daughters) is that of some aged officer, long ago suspended for his age—to whom the rules and implements of modern strategy are wholly new and strange—suddenly aspiring to command on the field of modern warfare: he raises his hand with all his pristine dignity; he gives the word with all the precision of one accustomed to command. Too full of respect for his grey hairs, and his pristine courage, and his rank, those around him do not ridicule him, or tell him he is mistaken; they simply salute him courteously, and pass on ignoring his commands.

*The decay of religious faith in Spain* divides itself into three distinct heads. The first subject of inquiry will naturally be, *What is the precise state of religious feeling existing at the present moment?* The second will be, *To what causes is the present state of things due?* And lastly, *Whither is it tending; what will be the result in the future of the religious position of the present?*

To answer these questions fairly, fully, and without exaggeration, will be the object of this paper; what the writer will say will certainly be suggestive; it may, he trusts, be productive in England of much good. Anyhow, it cannot fail to be full of the deepest interest.

I. What is the precise state of religious feeling in Spain at the present day? Some few years ago it was the writer's privilege, when in London, to attend one or two of a set of lectures, very original and suggestive, given by the great Indian reformer, Cheshub Chunder Sen, lectures which ultimately fell into the writer's hand. Mr. Sen was, as the writer understood him, one who had advanced far beyond the creed of his countrymen—(Brahmees, if my remembrance serves me rightly, was the name by which he designated them)—one who, having become dissatisfied with the superstitions of the Brahmins, had gone hither and thither seeking for a creed. His words were very striking, full as they were of those Scriptures of which, as the writer believes, he had grasped a part—and but a part. "I," he said, in perfectly good English, "I was for many years a man without a creed; I and hundreds of my fellow-Brahmees could not accept or hold to our own religion, and I made trial first of other religious systems in India; but, thirsty as I was, I found none to

give me drink; I was hungry, and they gave me no food. At last I read for myself, and I read carefully, the New Testament which you English deify. I re-read it with prayers: I read it, before I embraced its teaching, on my knees. I rose up a different man. I believed in the One God, the true Father of all who trust in Him; One who requires no sacrifice, nothing but the love of a true heart and sincerity."

"I do not," he went on, "with yourselves, call my Saviour God, because He says, '*I am the way*'—the way, not the goal: thither I cannot follow you; but I look up to Him as the only perfect Son of God.

"Long time had I gone about seeking rest and finding none; at last I had found rest to my soul—rest for which I thank my God daily."

The words were evidently the utterance of a true, loyal, and religious soul and of an inquiring and lofty mind: as I understood them, the speaker's position was that of the Unitarian Church: he believed in one God, and in one perfect Son of God, sent by Him to be men's guide and pattern, and there he stopped. Whether or no he went further, with Arianism, I cannot fairly remember. But it struck me at the time, that for a soul so devout and earnest the whole truth would be revealed: the whole evangelical faith, in all its fulness and blessedness, would be, I felt sure, finally grasped by his heart and soul.

The lecturer then went on to say that he and several hundreds of his fellow-countrymen, chiefly Indian barristers, and men of the other learned professions, had formed a sort of religious confraternity, or club, on the religious foundation he had explained, called the Brahmo-Somaj, and that their tenets were fast gaining ground among the educated Brahmins; that they were gathering daily disciples "from the thousands" (I quote his own words) "who are now in India going about, *having cast off their old faith, seeking for some faith on which to stay their soul.*"

The parallel between the religious state of the "thousands" here referred to and the "thousands" of Spain, among educated men, the writer conceives to be a very close one. Not for one moment does he intend to imply that the branch of the Catholic Church established in Spain—a Church which has given to its sons and daughters a duly ordained ministry, and Christian rites, and reli-

gious instruction, and in whose sublime churches the thousands of its faithful have made their hearts' desire known to their God, aye, and still make it known—is not one in which men may find all things necessary to salvation; but, he says, and means, because the fact is one patent to him, and freely conversed of in street, drawing-room, plaza, and casino, by Spanish gentlemen, and others of the lower class (who are not too indifferent—alas! with most of these the thoughts soar not above the search for daily bread)—and it is simply this: that the case of the educated Spanish gentlemen, and especially of professional men, tradesmen, and literary men and artisans—the state of all, in a word, who travel, think, or read—is exactly analogous to the state of his fellow-countrymen described by Cheshub Chunder Sen.

Like them, they have unobtrusively but certainly cast aside the faith in which they were brought up, and, having nothing sure, nothing established, nothing of a church, a public service, and the sympathy needed by mankind in its religious aspirations, which a church and assemblies foster—to which to cling, and on which to anchor their souls—they are simply going about, seeking some one to lead them by the hand, some one whose talents and character give him a claim to be trusted, to guide and direct their minds and souls; some one to help them to rise—as they do wish, and long, and pray to rise—above the dead level of indifference, and the weary meaningless round of daily life: daily work, or daily idleness; casino, politics, and cigarillo.

What, then, are the signs by which this state of religious feeling is betokened, and on what grounds is it justifiable to present so melancholy a view of religion?

I answer, one must be guided by four different signs of the times in forming an estimate: the tone of conversation in social circles; the statistics of church-going; the observation of various small facts in connection with this great subject, all of which are small, it is true, but, like the eddying straw of our trite English proverb, "serve to show the course of the stream;" and lastly, books, and literature.

(a) The decay of religious faith is shown by conversation in the social circles of Spain, especially among the more ardent of the Republicans.

There are three different names by which Republican Spain of the present

day, in the districts from which this article is dated, calls her sons, namely: *Ateos*; *Indiferentes*; and *libres pensadores*: that is, Atheists; those indifferent to religion at all, or undecided; and free-thinkers.

These are terms of daily use among us. A man, however, would never say of himself, "I am an *Ateo*," although he *might* (and very frequently *does*) apply that "word without hope" to his friend's state of mind. The "El Credo" of the *Ateo* is something of this nature—a credo, if it can be called a credo at all, which has come into this country with freedom of French literature. A man reads little, prays little, thinks a good deal and observes a good deal. He comes to the conclusion that to *sin* is according to nature (*muy natural*), and therefore, that He who has proclaimed that to *sin* is worthy of blame, and shall be punished, cannot be the Author of Nature; for he reasons: "Why did God make it natural to me to *sin*, and yet say, 'I will punish you if you *sin*'?" He goes further. He says: "I see Nature; I feel her power; I know in many things she is right. I do not see God; I do not feel His power. I see the poor oppressed; I see *sin* triumphant; I see the Church proclaim things in His name, as celibacy, clearly against Nature. Nature exists, as I can prove: I cannot prove that God exists: therefore, I believe that Nature is God; for Nature is stronger than anything." Such is the *Credo*, such the profession of hundreds of men of this belief, if it can be called a belief. They are sometimes known by the name of *Materialistas*, although this term implies something still more faithless. For instance, a *Materialista* would say, if his fellow-creature showed any deep penitence, any deep religious melancholy, "Oh! it is the work of Nature; bodily illness is diseasing his mind." Some of the coarser forms would go even further; but of these it is not needful to speak.

The position of the *Indiferente* is less defined, and more common. It is a state of heart and mind, this indifference, which, from many different causes, does not care at all for religion, or feel its power; and yet would, and does saunter into church on the proper days, and listen to the music, and to the sermon, if at all a striking one. Here is one reason, which incidentally I may be pardoned for introducing, why the clergy of Spain have so completely lost their hold on the

minds of *men*: their sermons never strike home, never fairly meet a doubt, seldom inculcate the moral teaching of Christ. An *Indiferente* often becomes indifferent from long continuance in *sin*, or prayerlessness; still more often, from utter indecision of character. He is a man who reads, cursorily, the religious literature of France, of what is here designated the French Liberal School. He commences with a book read by all the educated Spaniards—"Vie de Jésus, par Ernst Renan," or "Les Apôtres," by the same author. Doubts are instilled into his mind—a mind in all probability of very barren soil before; the weeds grow up and flourish. He has no one to advise him; he does not go deeply into the subject; he is too careless and too pusillanimous, and has too much love for his wife's feelings and respect for his Church, to throw off the mask and openly say, "I do not hold the old El Credo;" so he goes on, and is called, and truly, one of the *Indiferentes*. Thousands are in this state of mind; like the disciples of the Brahmo-Somaj, they are going about, seeking rest, and finding none.

The third class of unorthodox Spaniard is perhaps the most common—the man who does not hesitate to call himself one of *los libres pensadores*, "the free-thinkers." This term, in England, is usually applied to one who has cast off much, or all, of his faith in God. Here, however, the term has no such meaning. It simply means, one who chooses to think for himself, and embrace that creed which he believes best for his temporal and eternal welfare. Thousands of the educated sons of Republican Spain would think it no discredit to themselves or others to say, "I am a free-thinker," or "He belongs to the free-thinkers," because the term, in Spain, conveys no idea at all of disbelief in a personal God and Father of us all: it simply denotes what is called in England, Broad Churchism. And men say, truly enough, there is more religion where there is life, thought, inquiry, restlessness, than in the torpor of indifference, or the dead slumber of one who is too careless about religion to take any pains about it, and therefore gives a careless acquiescence to statements and doctrines about the truth of which he has taken no pains to enquire—the "belief" of one who has never *disbelieved*, simply because he has never really believed at all. This class of "*libres pensadores*" is composed chiefly of *educated Republi-*



*cans.* This freedom of religious thought—which came in with the Republic—a sort of fierce reaction after the tight curb of Roman Catholicism in the Queen's time—is the *typo*, or type, of the modern statesman, orator, literary man of Spain. Although none of the three classes here alluded to are, strictly speaking, confined to the Republican ranks, yet they chiefly exist among the Republicans.

Having sought, with all candour, to explain the religious status of the three great bodies of educated Spaniards known in social circles as Atheists, Indifferents, and Free-thinkers, the writer of this review of Spanish religious feeling continues his description of the first and most superficial of those signs of the times by which the state of that religious feeling may fairly be appreciated:—*Conversation in the educated circles of Spain.*

And here, for a moment, I would pause. Those in England into whose hands these pages may fall, will naturally complain, and with some apparent truth, "The writer of this article keeps on speaking about educated men, and Republicans: do not the masses of the poor enter into his account?" The question is a fair one, and shall be fairly answered. The answer is this. The population of Spain, by our last Government returns, was sixteen millions; and, by the same documents, twelve millions were returned as "unable either to read or to write." Surely one can only speak, when one speaks of the state of feeling in a nation on religious or political matters, of the opinions of those who can read or write at least a little. Were I to write of the state of religious feeling among the *uneducated*, in the town of the interior, in the fishing village of the coast, in the vineyard or the olive-press, I should merely sum it up in three words: superstition, carelessness, blind discontent. Before the end of this series, a few words shall be devoted to the uneducated masses; but, be it remembered, wherever there is an absence of education, there is present blind and palpable imitation of others; and the poor, rude, suffering fisherman or goat-herd has often said to me, when asked as to his religion, "I am an Evangelico;" and when pressed to explain, he would say merely the name of some Protestant church, or some popular leader of thought in his country, and add, with true Spanish pride, "He and I have common ground!"

Recurring to my subject—the state of religious feeling as indicated by the conversation current in social circles—let me say, that never have I heard, and never again would I wish to hear, such utterances of utter unrest, utter—I was going to say despair—as I daily and hourly hear now around me.

This state of unrest and disquietude, and fruitless quest of the good and the stable, perplexes and dismays the heart, and paralyzes the thought. One is fain to ask again and again the old question, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" And again and again the self-same answer is given back, "Dark and stormy. Dark and stormy." And truly our night *is* dark and stormy. Well do I remember, in the days of youth, passing down one of the back streets of London's lowest quarters, and speaking to a poor old withered-up crone who sat on her lowly doorstep: before her, overshadowing her little house, were a Wesleyan chapel, a Mission chapel of the Established Church, and a Roman Catholic church. "To which of all those, mother," said I, "do you go to worship?" And the answer came back, quietly but firmly, from her trembling lips, "*I looks only to One above.*" And one cannot help feeling that only, and entirely, the help in which that poor woman trusted, *can* save and redeem Spain of to-day.

The attitude of the thinking mass of Spaniards reminds one daily of the question asked in Holy Story, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" but one listens in vain for the answer from the self-same lips, "Thou (and only Thou) hast the words of eternal life."

If you shall be conversing with a Spanish gentleman of Republican views, on the subject of religion, his words will be very few; but they will be *very* sad. The following conversation occurred a short time since between the writer of this review and a literary man in Spain, of real culture and refinement. He himself introduced the subject on which I write by saying to me, "I believe you are a Protestant?" After answering his question, I merely said, "You have now the advantage of me: are you not yourself a Roman Catholic?" "Yes," was the reply; "yes, I am a Roman Catholic—that is to say, I have not renounced that *credo*; it is more convenient not to have an open rupture. But," said he, "I believe really in nothing of the ceremonies or rites of my Church; I pray to

God at home; I believe in Him, and in Jesus Christ. I consider myself exactly at the stand-point of your English Church. I despise the music, the processions, and the unintelligible tongue of my Church's services; I hate to see money given for such things; but I do feel the need of public worship without all this. Four bare walls, and a pure heart, are all that is needed to serve and love God." He added a few words to this effect: that no appeal to the senses should ever be made in a church—nothing touched, save a man's heart.

I did not press the subject further, for both his heart and my own were too full. Yet once again let me recur to a few words said to me by a Spanish student—words which, spoken but a few weeks since, have never left my memory. We were supping together, merely discussing the subject of art in this country; and, as conversation (even in Spain!) will fall into the religious groove, at last we spoke of religion. He was a Roman Catholic, but, as he himself allowed, "Indiferente." He was speaking of public prayer, and I merely remarked that, as he never went to public prayer, I supposed he found an equal solace in private prayer. I then spoke of sermons, and added, "Do you find no help in the sermons of your clergy?"

This then was, word for word, to the best of the writer's recollection, the language of his reply:—"The English pray; they try to act up to their religion, because they can believe it: we cannot, with modern literature at hand, swallow *our* religion at a gulp. You must give up one of the two. I hold to neither. As to us, as a rule, we do not pray to God. You ask about sermons: well, I went into a church, the other day, to listen to one who was said to be a good preacher. He did, truly, preach magnificently; I never saw a man with such a flow of language; he was an orator! But"—(*pero*, the constant Spanish antithesis)—"with all his flow of language, I only remembered two things, as I left the church: he compared the exceeding purity of the Virgin to a cup of silver and a tower of ivory; and there was no room at all for God or Jesus Christ. These clergy, who aspire to guide us to peace here, and in the next (*if there be a next*) world," continued he, "never preach about the *only two things worth preaching about, Virtue and the Almighty.*"

As usual, then, with the education of his order, this young fellow simply be-

lieved in and longed for tidings of the Christian moral code, and the Fatherhood of God. For *that* his soul thirsted; for *that* he went to church; he was a hungerer and thirster, I truly believe, after righteousness: a few simple words would have gone straight to his heart; for those few simple words he looked and waited, and for them, alas! he looked and waited in vain.

Another leading topic of conversation is (as I have already mentioned) the deification of Nature. In high Republican circles in Spain it is constantly said, "We make war against all that is against Nature. It must be wrong."

I once asked of a Republican orator, "How can you justify your fellows' act in turning the nuns out of their convent?"

"We would turn out the priests too, if we could; because we want all men not to be unnatural. Celibacy is unnatural."

"But is not *expulsion* a rough way of inculcating a moral lesson?"

"*Muy bien*," was his answer, "but we must use rough measures sometimes."

The ignorance of their clergy, again, is a constant theme of conversation among the Spanish Republicans. They will have it—I know not with what truth—that the priests know little besides the Lives of the Saints and Latin books. As to geography, say they, or modern history, they know nothing; and modern literature they never read!

Many thoughts here force themselves upon me. Among others, fain am I to confess that some slight tribute is due to the worth of the priests. Where they *could* give to the poor, the writer of this review believes, they freely gave of what they had. But now, they are poor indeed, and rejected of men. Still their influence is great, and this for two reasons. *First*, because their hold on the women of a family is still great: the devout and simple-minded women of the family still give to their church and priest—still are regular at confession, prayers, and Mass.

The *second* reason of their influence is this: that so many of the clergy come from influential families, are, in fact, *benenati*. In Galicia, and the North of Spain, the poor, and very oftentimes the uneducated, become clergymen. But in the interior, and in the South, as regards the town clergy, most, or at least many of them, are well-born; and many a family puts its dullest member into the Church, as the *dernier ressort*, that he may have a

certain position and status in society. In the towns, however, the clergy are generally selected for the merits of their education and for their talents.

Gladly do I turn from this first part of the signs of the times, merely adding a trifling anecdote which I heard some few months since in the best-educated city in Spain — the only city where one-half of the population can read or write. A Spanish woman went into church a few minutes before service, to inquire who would be the evening preacher.

"*El chantre*," was the answer. This would be equivalent in English, I suppose, to the precentor.

"*Que lo oiga su abuela*" ("Let his grandmother hear it") was the answer, as the woman swept out of the church.

To a candid mind this little anecdote (a "good story") shows, surely, an irreverence for the Church which dismays one, on the one hand, but, at the same time, a real seeking and longing for that which, for so many hundred years, we have called, with truth, the good news of God.

How bitterly upon English ears would have fallen the words with which, a short time since, the streets of my town were ringing — "Our Castelar is the Saviour, the Christ of 1873"! One can only say, as one hears such words, that one's best hope is that He whom they crucify may pray — as we doubt not He does pray for them — "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they say." Alas! Castelar's reign over these people's hearts is short indeed; already are vague rumours of his unpopularity, and of "Pi y Margall and the Cantonal system," floating about among us, though perhaps Spain has known no more liberal, religious, or noble leader than Emilio Castelar!

(b) Among those signs by which the state of religious feeling may be known, I mentioned, in the second place, the statistics of church-going.

Very few men, as a rule, attend church. The old anecdote of Sydney Smith is constantly recalled to one's memory. He preached, we have heard, upon the text "O that *men* would therefore praise the Lord for His goodness," when, Sunday after Sunday, his quiet village church was denuded of *men*. And in Spain the emphasis might well, and with reason, be laid upon the same word — "O that *men* would praise the Lord!"

What *is* seen in the churches of Spain — and I have gone to her country parish churches and to her large cathedrals — is this: the bright array of lights, the

gaudy dresses of the saints, the black, white, and embroidered vestments of the priests, as in solemn silence they come forth to kneel and pray before the altar of our common God and Father. What is *not* seen is the bronzed face of the vine-dresser, the worn visage of the artisan, the pale face of the *littérateur*; the sailor, the soldier, the bookseller, the tailor. Where are they? They are not here!

What *is* heard in our Spanish churches is, the unintelligible prayers of the priests; the ringing, joyous, inspiring clash of the music, oftentimes supplemented with the sweet carol of birds; the deep bass of the head singer. What is *not* heard is, the answer of *men's* voices; what is not heard is, the deep "Amen" to every prayer. "*No hay*." It is not here! There is no response from the men! They are away — at the *Muséo*, at "*La Librería*," at the *Casino* — but here, "*no hay*."

In Spanish churches you simply see and hear women — for the most part well-bred women — kneeling devoutly upon the rush-matting of the church, and praying to their God: I *must* say praying, to all appearances, most fervently, most earnestly. I have seen nothing in Spain of that looking round and back, so common with ladies in England, to scan every person who comes into the church.

It is said in England, that one out of every six of our *male* population goes to a place of worship. Here we have no places of worship save those of the Established Church, and I fear that not one in every twenty-five enters these to pray.

I mentioned as the two last signs of the decay of religious faith, the transactions, however small, which have lately taken place; and the bookstalls of Republican Spain.

Let me touch upon these briefly, and then enter upon the *causes* of this revolt against religion, and the speculation, Whither does it tend?

(c) If it has more than once been asserted, in the course of this review of the state of religious feeling in Spain, that the small occurrences of daily life, and the acts of the revolutionary party in the summer of 1873, have shown and are daily bearing witness to the decay of religious faith in Spain, these assertions, it shall now be demonstrated, are not made without sufficient grounds.

Enter many of the Government ("del Rey") hospitals in Spain, and ask

whether there is any religious service, any ministrations of clergy, in those towns where there has been a revolution—that is, where popular feeling obtained for a while the mastery—and you will find that they no longer exist. They were dismissed during the summer revolution, and the chapel of the hospital is closed; the priest—an institution as old as the hospital walls—no longer lives within them, or attends to the sick and dying among its inmates.

Among the Foundling Hospitals, the Christian rite of baptism is in many cases no longer administered; in smaller hospitals, or homes, you will find, on inquiry, "We had a chapel, but have none now; the clergy lived here, but now only the doctors are allowed to reside on the premises." Go to many of the churches of Spain, whose walls, once richly gilt with the paintings of her great sons, attracted many a strange traveller's footsteps, and mark if in many of these cases they are not taken away. In some cases they were carried to a place of safety until this tyranny be overpassed; in a still greater number they were rudely torn down (I have seen some literally *torn* in the operation) and carried off to the Public Library or the *Muséo*, and thither you must follow if you would behold them.

Sundays are fearfully desecrated. If it be true, as has often been asserted, that where, during the great French Revolution, Sundays were abolished, and every day of the seven was a working-day—if it be true that the abolishing of the prescribed day of rest, and the incessant strain of work caused by it, led to disease of mind, and in many cases lunacy, one can but tremble for this country, for it seems that Sunday is often wholly, and the Feast days partially ignored.

Again, the aspect of the Church herself is wholly stagnant. With her 42,000 clergy, whose charge are fearfully demoralized, and, in the interior, utterly ignorant, men who are joyless, religionless, mindless, one looks in vain for tidings of the newly-endowed home, the fresh school walls, the congress, or the midnight mission. These are not. The faded dresses, and in many cases the worn and sad countenances of the clergy, too, all point, not to life, but to a slow decay.

In the interior, the frequent interments without religious rites, the secular and profane so-called baptisms, known as the "Civil Funeral" and the "Civil Baptism"; the sight of the priests, often-

times forced, because their pecuniary support has been taken away, or at least is no longer paid at present by the Government of their country; the indecent behaviour of men, very often, who keep their hats on as the procession of the Host files by,—these, and such as these, are the signs of a deep-seated hatred to the religion of their forefathers, and of the reaction which has set in with the Republic against the Church established in this land.

Petty in some cases have been the means by which men of very ultra opinions have shown their contempt for the "Credo" in which they have been brought up. To change the name of a street because it bore a Saint's name; to mutilate a pillar because the figure of a Saint was sculptured upon it,—these were unworthy of Republican Spain, and were and would ever be repudiated by all her right-minded sons. But such things were.

(d) And if the general tone of conversation in educated Republican circles; if the statistics of church-going; if the daily events—trifling perhaps in themselves, but not trifling when viewed in connection with other things—all bespeak and bear witness to a growing dissatisfaction with their established religion, restlessness, and reaction; no less do the gaudy bookstalls of the cities of Spain show the same tendency to revolution.

For a few reals (a real = 2 1-2d.) the mind may have its glut of materialism and blank unbelief. Every school of thought here known as liberal ("liberal" meaning any work on religion which is not distinctively Roman Catholic) is represented on these shelves. To enumerate these cheap works would be a long and fruitless task; it would simply be to recapitulate the titles of the works of all the modern writers, French, German, English, and Spanish, of the various schools of free thought, beginning, as I have said, with the works of E. Renan, which are *very* popular here, in Spanish translations, and ending with the countless little works of the modern Spanish thinkers—oftentimes mere imitations of the French authors and schools—bearing such high-sounding titles as "The New Religion for the People," or "The Teaching of Natural Religion!"

II. The writer thinks that enough has been already quoted on the *first* subject proposed for consideration, and passes on to consider very briefly the two other

subjects, or lines of thought, proposed at the commencement, in connection with the great subject of which he has merely endeavoured to present the picture as exhibited to the outsider.

He passes on therefore to ask, *To what causes is the present state of religious feeling due?*

The present state of religious feeling in Spain then is, he believes, simply a natural reaction from the excessively tight reins with which her sons were held during the reign of the late Queen, and, of course, long before the accession of that sovereign. We all know that the starting back of the bow is fierce, sudden, and often self-destructive, when the string is suddenly relaxed; and that in proportion as had been the tightness of the restraint, so will be the fierceness of the recoil. And so, now that men are suddenly freed, by enactments of the Republic, from the necessity of subscribing to the doctrines of the Established Church; now that liberty has been proclaimed after so many years of slavery, it is not at all, the writer thinks, matter for wonder, that their liberty should for a while be utter *license* (as it certainly is). The wonder would be if such were *not* the case.

And, *secondly*, the reaction of feeling against the Established Church—for we must still call it so—is due in great measure to the abuses and superstitions which have existed in that Church. When reasonable men are compelled to belong to a society whose members in authority proclaim as truths doctrines which they cannot accept in any sense as true; when they are compelled to acquiesce in what they believe to be gross superstitions, they *will*, and in patient, indifferent Spain they *have* for a while given a silent acquiescence; but now, men travel, men read; education, though very slowly, is spreading even here; floods of books come in from France, Germany, and England; all are now free to buy and read them; and men see that they have *been blinded*; that the whole truth has not been proclaimed to them; and they will not, in so vital a matter as religion, any longer be trifled with. With one voice, from the educated artisan to the Chief of her Republic, the educated sons of Spain say, "We will be free; we will serve God as our hearts tell us, and not submit the reason He has given us to the thralldom of Church decrees."

And, *thirdly*, the want of freedom and of a liberal and general education of the

clergy of this land has been one fruitful cause of discontent. Many are men of education and culture, but not by any means all; and, as a rule, they are too much bound down by subscription to *this* article, and *that* decree, to have any original thought or research for themselves; they do not meet the doubts and acknowledge the tendencies of the age in which it has pleased God to cast their lot, and so they cannot guide, shape, and direct into its proper channel modern thought.

And, *fourthly*, the Church of this nation has fallen in the esteem of her children because she has not, as other churches have, sought to *educate* the masses committed to her care; she has given them no fresh light of knowledge, and they cannot understand her services, these poor, uneducated masses; and so, receiving little, they—the most uneducated—though still afraid of, and full of awe for her power, do not *love* her in their heart of hearts, and, not loving, they cannot believe in her beauty or her wisdom.

And, *lastly*, the revolt against the religion of their land by her sons may be assigned to this fact: that nothing which is not based upon perfect truth can ever ultimately prosper. With all that is good in her, no thoughtful man can fail to see how much is withheld of Divine truth, how much is supplied of human invention to the doctrine and discipline of the Roman Church. No warping of the truth, no withholding of the whole message of God can prosper. Such is one moral of the decay of religious faith among the thousands of my country this day!

III. But it is time to draw to a close a paper which has cost the writer many months of research and observation, but in the compilation of which he has never left his daily path of duty to seek his materials. He has merely thrown together, into perhaps a somewhat crude, but, he trusts, intelligible form, the result of a long sojourn in the country from which he writes, and from whose sons, of every shade of religious opinion, he has received unmingled kindness. Our third line of thought was this: To what is all this unsettlement of religious belief tending?

The writer answers: *To good*. To the establishment of a purer, truer, more lightful religion in this land; a religion more Scriptural, more what the Spanish people call "*Evangelical*," i.e. Christian, in the broadest, deepest, widest acceptance of the word. Things, *as they are*, cannot long remain. Either the tight,



fierce rein must be again had recourse to — (that, the writer believes, never will, or can be) — or, as most educated men think and say, a wave of truer, simpler, broader religion, of which this surf is but the prelude, will sweep over and cleanse this land. As in nature, so in things divine, things religious: when the storm is fiercest, it must soon be over; when the night is darkest, dawn is ever nearest. Man's extremity is ever God's greatest opportunity. How often in the history of individuals and of nations has the truth of these trite sayings been realized! — the Renaissance in France, the Reformation in England, — how were these heralded in? And may the religious dawn of suffering, restless, aspiring Spain, be the dawn of that true religion and useful learning which kindles more and more into the perfect, peaceful, shining day.

A short comparison between the state of the Church of this land, and that of her Sister Church of England, shall, in conclusion, be offered.

The Churches of England and of Spain are, if the writer's recollection of the former serves him in good stead, both of them to be considered as sick men, and to be judged of accordingly. But there is a difference in sickness, and in the signs of it: a difference which, by practised eyes, is well understood.

In the sickness of the Church of England, I see all the signs of a sick man, fretful and anxious, and dissatisfied, and restless, it is true — but, still, of a sick man waking up to life again from the long slumber that had promised, at one time, to end in nothing but death. In the Church of England I see life: life in her many Missions; life in her schools and churches, rising up in every desolate hamlet and every over-populated outskirts of her large towns; life in her overflowing Congresses; life in the keen interest with which all her proceedings are canvassed and criticised by the public press; life in the existence of unorthodox ministers within her fold; life in her many religious dissensions: and, where life is, there is *hope*.

In her Sister Church of Spain I see no signs of life. Her clergy preach, one and all, as they preached one hundred years ago. Her chief prayers are still offered in a tongue "not understood" of her sons and daughters — the self-same lack of independence and of originality of thought is, as of old, imposed upon her ministers. Her services are magnificent,

many of her churches and cathedrals sublime; but it is the sublimity of a grand architecture, it is the attraction of a gorgeous and sensual ritual; there is spirited music and flashing lights, and a grand appeal to the senses. There are, it is true, none unorthodox among her ministers; but it is all too possible, as the experience of past ages has taught us, "*Solitudinem facere, pacem appellare.*"

As for the living souls outside her churches; as for those that hunger and thirst for Hope and Truth and Love and Faith, where are they? "*Aquí, no hay, señor. Aquí, no hay.*" ("Here they are not found — nay, not here.")

In conclusion, the writer would observe, it may be true that in the Church of England there is a vast deal of mental unrest, a certain amount of alienation of the masses from their Church's services; but, be it remembered, that in that country both clergy and statesmen and bishops are making gigantic efforts — by increased personal zeal, by increased manifestation of love for the masses, by the measures of educational improvement lately promulgated and acted upon; by the fixed determination of many of the most enlightened among the clergy not to tighten but to loosen the reins, not to make narrower but to make broader the terms of communion with their Church; by the increased education of the clergy, and their better acquaintance with *modern* and ancient literature — by all these means, the writer says, the Anglican Communion is making visible and gigantic efforts to recover its lost ground — ground won from it during the repose of centuries.

And in speaking of the Church in England in comparison with that of Spain, ever must it be borne in mind that the majority of those who do not enter the doors of the church, at least enter the doors of the chapel; and that those who are not within the fold of England's Established Church are, at any rate, able to find shelter within the fold of some one of the many of her Christian communities; whereas that in Spain the case is wholly different. Here, there is no communion, save with the ancient Church by Law Established. "Leave her," men say. "Yes! But what then?" It is the question of many an uneasy soul in these days, and in this country: "Lord, to whom shall I go?" Leave the Church's one fold, and you have left all: all the light, all the guide, and all the shelter, such as they are! Alone you pass out into the great darkness, yea, even into a darkness

that may be felt; alone must you wander upon the mountains, seeking some track to guide your weary footsteps; alone must you lie down, as the shades of your last long night draw on—confused, bewildered, baffled, deserted, and in pain. It is so. He who leaves the “one fold” in Spain has “no place to flee unto, and no man cares for his soul.” In his reading, in his thought, in his hope, in his prayer, in his belief, for him there is simple, sheer, utter loneliness: it is “*chacun pour soi*” in everything. That the finale of that proverb may also be true of the sons of Republican Spain—who have no anchor, sure and steadfast, of their souls—is the earnest hope, desire, and expectation of the writer of this review; that if, at present, it must be—and it must—“*chacun pour soi*,” it may also be “*et Dieu pour nous tous*.”

From The Graphic.

#### HARRY HEATHCOTE OF GANGOIL: A TALE OF AUSTRALIAN BUSH LIFE.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE,

Author of “*Barchester Towers*,” “*The Eustace Diamonds*,” “*Phineas Redux*,” &c.

#### CHAPTER X.

#### HARRY HEATHCOTE RETURNS IN TRIUMPH.

WHEN the fight was quite over, and Heathcote's party had returned to their horses, Medlicot for a few minutes was faint and sick, but he revived after a while, and declared himself able to sit on his horse. There was a difficulty in getting him up, but when there, he made no further complaint. “This,” said he, as he settled himself in his saddle, “is my first Christmas day in Australia. I landed early in January, and last year I was on my way home to fetch my mother.”

“It is not much like an English Christmas,” said Harry.

“Nor yet as in Hanover,” said the German.

“It's Cork you should go to, or Galway, bedad, if you want to see Christmas kep' after the ould fashion,” said Micky.

“I think we used to do it pretty well in Cumberland,” said Medlicot. “There are things which can't be transplanted. They may roast beef, and all that, but you should have cold weather to make you feel that it is Christmas indeed.”

“We do it as well as we can,” Harry pleaded. “I've seen a great pudding

come into the room all afire,—just to remind one of the old country,—when it has been so hot that one could hardly bear a shirt on one's shoulders. But yet there's something in it. One likes to think of the old place, though one is so far away. How do you feel now? Does the jolting hurt you much? If your horse is rough, change with me. This fellow goes as smooth as a lady.” Medlicot declared that the pain did not trouble him much. “They'd have ridden over us, only for you,” continued Harry.

“My word,—wouldn't they?” said Jacko, who was very proud of his own part in the battle. “I say, Mr. Medlicot, did you see Bos and his horse part company? You did, Mr. Harry. Didn't he fly like a bird, all in among the bushes! I owed Bos one; I did, my word! And now I've paid him.”

“I saw it,” said Harry. “He was riding at me as hard as he could come. I can't understand Boscobel. Nokes is a sly, bad, slinging fellow, whom I never liked. But I was always good to Bos; and when he cheated me, as he did, about his time, I never even threatened to stop his money.”

“You told him of it too plain,” said the German.

“I did tell him,—of course,—as I should you. It has come to that now that if a man robs you,—your own man,—you are not to dare to tell him of it! What would you think of me, Karl, if I were to find you out and was to be afraid of speaking to you, lest you should turn against me and burn my fences?” Karl Bender shrugged his shoulders, holding his reins up to his eyes. “I know what you ought to think! And I wish that every man about Gangoil should be sure that I will always say what I think right. I don't know that I ever was hard upon any man. I try not to be.”

“Thru for you, Mr. Harry,” said the Irishman.

“I'm not going to pick my words because men like Nokes and Boscobel have the power of injuring me. I'm not going to truckle to rascals because I'm afraid of them. I'd sooner be burned out of house and home, and go and work on the wharves in Brisbane than that.”

“My word! yes,” said Jacko, “and I too.”

“If the devil is to get ahead he must, but I won't hold a candle to him. You fellows may tell every man about the place what I say. As long as I'm master

of Gangoil I'll be master, and when I come across a swindle I'll tell the man who does it he's a swindler. I told Bos to his face;—but I didn't tell anybody else, and I shouldn't if he'd taken it right and mended his ways."

They all understood him very well,—the German, the Irishman, Medlicot's foreman, Medlicot himself, and even Jacko; and though, no doubt, there was a feeling within the hearts of the men that Harry Heathcote was imperious, still they respected him,—and they believed him. "The master should be the master, no doubt," said the Irishman.

"A man that is a man will not sell his self body and soul," said the German, slowly.

"Do I want dominion over your soul, Karl Bender?" asked the squatter with energy. "You know I don't, nor over your body, except so far as it suits you to sell your services. What you sell you part with readily,—like a man; and it's not likely that you and I shall quarrel. But all this row about nothing can't be very pleasant to a man with a broken shoulder."

"I like to hear you," said Medlicot. "I'm always a good listener when men have something really to say."

"Well, then,—I've something to say," cried Harry. "There never was a man came to my house whom I'd sooner see as a Christmas guest than yourself."

"Thankee, sir."

"It's more than I could have said yesterday with truth."

"It's more than you did say."

"Yes, by George! But you've beat me now. When you're hard pressed for hands down yonder, you send for me and see if I won't turn the mill for you, —or hoe canes either."

"So'll I; my word, yes.—Just for my rations."

They had by this time reached the Gangoil fence, having taken the directest route for the house. But Harry in doing this had not been unmindful of the fire. Had Medlicot not been wounded he would have taken the party somewhat out of the way, down southwards, following the flames; but Medlicot's condition had made him feel that he would not be justified in doing so. Now, however, it occurred to him, that he might as well ride a mile or two down the fence, and see what injury had been done. The escort of the men would be sufficient to take Medlicot to the station, and he would reach the place as soon as they. If the

flames were still running ahead he knew that he could not now stop them, but he could at least learn how the matter stood with him. If the worst came to the worst he would not now lose more than three or four miles of fencing and the grass off a corner of his run. Nevertheless, tired as he was, he could not bear the idea of going home without knowing the whole story. So he made his proposal. Medlicot, of course, made no objection. Each of the men offered to go with him, but he declined their services. "There is nothing to do," said he, "and nobody to catch; and if the fire is burning it must burn." So he went alone.

The words that he had uttered among his men had not been lightly spoken. He had begun to perceive that life would be very hard to him in his present position, or perhaps altogether impossible, as long as he was at enmity with all those around him. Old squatters whom he knew, respectable men who had been in the colony before he was born, had advised him to be on good terms with the Brownbies. "You needn't ask them to your house, or go to them,—but just soft-sawder them when you meet," an old gentleman had said to him. He certainly hadn't taken the old gentleman's advice,—thinking that to "soft-sawder" so great a reprobate as Jerry Brownbie would be holding a candle to the devil. But his own plan had hardly answered. Well,—he was sure at any rate of this;—that he could do no good now by endeavouring to be civil to the Brownbies. He soon came to the place where the fire had reached his fence, and found that it had burned its way through, and that the flames were still continuing their onward course. The fence to the north,—or rather to the north-westward, the point whence the wind was coming,—stood firm at the spot at which the fire had struck it. Dry as the wood was the flames had not travelled upwards against the wind. But to the south the fire was travelling down the fence. To stop this he rode a half mile along the burning barrier till he had headed the flames, and then he pulled the bushes down and rolled away the logs, so as to stop the destruction. As regarded his fence, there was less than a mile of it destroyed, and that he could now leave in security, as the wind was blowing away from it. As for his grass, that must now take its chance. He could see the dark light of the low running fire, but there was no longer a mighty blaze, and he knew that

the dew of the night was acting as his protector. The harm that had been as yet done was trifling, if only he could protect himself from further harm. After leaving the fire he had still a ride of seven or eight miles through the gloom of the forest,—all alone. Not only was he weary, but his horse was so tired that he could hardly get him to canter for a furlong. He regretted that he had not brought the boy with him, knowing well the service of companionship to a tired beast. He was used to such troubles, and could always tell himself that his back was broad enough to bear them; but his desolation among enemies oppressed him. Medlicot, however, was no longer an enemy. Then there came across his mind for the first time an idea that Medlicot might marry his sister-in-law, and become his fast friend. If he could have but one true friend he thought that he could bear the enmity of all the Brownbies. Hitherto he had been entirely alone in his anxiety. It was between three and four when he reached Gangoil, and he found that the party of horsemen had just entered the yard before him. The sugar-planter was so weak that he could hardly get off his horse.

The two ladies were still watching when the cavalcade arrived, though it was then between three and four in the morning. It was Harry's custom on such occasions to ride up to the little gate close to the verandah, and there to hang his bridle till some one should take his horse away; but on this occasion he and the others rode into the yard. Seeing this Mrs. Heathcote and her sister went through the house, and soon learned how things were. Mr. Medlicot from the mill had come with a bone broken, and it was their duty to nurse him till a doctor could be procured from Maryborough. Now Maryborough was thirty miles distant. Some one must be dispatched at once. Jacko volunteered, but in such a service Jacko was hardly to be trusted. He might fall asleep on his horse and continue his slumbers on the ground. Mickey and the German both offered;—but the men were so beaten by their work that Heathcote did not dare to take their offer. "I'll tell you what it is, Mary," he said to his wife, "there is nothing for it but for me to go for Jackson." Jackson was the doctor. "And I can see the police at the same time."

"You sha'n't go, Harry. You are so tired already you can hardly stand this moment."

"Get me some strong coffee,—at once. You don't know what that man has done for us. I'll tell you all another time. I owe him more than a ride into Maryborough. I'll make the men get Yorkie up,"—Yorkie was a favourite horse he had,—"while you make the coffee; and I'll lead Colonel;"—Colonel was another horse well esteemed at Gangoil; "Jackson will come quicker on him than on any animal he can get at Maryborough." And so it was arranged, in spite of the wife's tears and entreaties. Harry had his coffee and some food, and started with his two horses for the doctor.

Nature is so good to us that we are sometimes disposed to think we might have dispensed with art. In the bush, where doctors cannot be had, bones will set themselves; and when doctors do come, but come slowly, the broken bones suit themselves to such tardiness. Medlicot was brought in and put to bed. Let the reader not be shocked to hear that Kate Daly's room was given up to him, as being best suited for a sick man's comfort; and the two ladies took it in turn to watch him. Mrs. Heathcote was, of course, the first, and remained with him till dawn. Then Kate crept to the door and asked whether she should relieve her sister. Medlicot was asleep, and it was agreed that Kate should remain in the verandah and look in from time to time to see whether the wounded man required aught at her hands. She looked in very often, and then, at last, he was awake. "Miss Daly," he said, "I feel so ashamed of the trouble I'm giving."

"Don't speak of it. It is nothing. In the bush everybody, of course, does anything for everybody." When the words were spoken she felt that they were not as complimentary as she would have wished. "You were to have come to-day you know, but we did not think you'd come like this,—did we?"

"I don't know why I didn't go home instead of coming here."

"The doctor will reach Gangoil sooner than he could the Mill. You are better here, and we will send for Mrs. Medlicot as soon as the men have had a rest. How was it all, Mr. Medlicot? Harry says that there was a fight, and that you came in just at the nick of time, and that but for you all the run would have been burned."

"Not that at all."

"He said so; only he went off so quickly, and was so busy with things,

that we hardly understood him. Is it not dreadful that there should be such fighting? And then these horrid fires! You were in the middle of the fire, were you not?" It suited Kate's feelings that Medicot should be the hero of this occasion.

"We were lighting them in front to put them out behind."

"And then, while you were at work, these men from Boolabong came upon you. Oh, Mr. Medicot, we shall be so very, very wretched if you are much hurt. My sister is so unhappy about it."

"It's only my collar-bone, Miss Daly."

"But that is so dreadful." She was still thinking of the one word he had spoken when he had—well, not asked her for her love, but said that which between a young man and a young woman ought to mean the same thing. Perhaps it had meant nothing! She had heard that young men do say things which mean nothing. But to her, living in the solitude of Gangoil, the one word had been so much! Her heart had melted with absolute acknowledged love when the man had been brought through into the house with all the added attraction of a broken bone. While her sister had watched she had retired—to rest, as Mary had said, but in truth to think of the chance which had brought her in this guise into familiar contact with the man she loved. And then when she had crept up to take her place in watching him, she had almost felt that shame should restrain her. But it was her duty;—and of course a man with a collar-bone broken would not speak of love.

"It will make your Christmas so sad for you," he said.

"Oh, as for that, we mind nothing about it—for ourselves. We are never very gay here."

"But you are happy?"

"Oh, yes, quite happy—except when Harry is disturbed by these troubles. I don't think anybody has so many troubles as a squatter. It sometimes seems that all the world is against him."

"We shall be allies now, at any rate."

"Oh, I do so hope we shall," said Kate, putting her hands together in her energy, and then retreating from her energy with sad awkwardness when she remembered the personal application of her wish. "That is, I mean you and Harry," she added in a whisper.

"Why not I and others besides Harry?"

"It is so much to him to have a real friend. Things concern us, of course,

only just as they concern him. Women are never of very much account, I think. Harry has to do everything, and everything ought to be done for him."

"I think you spoil Harry among you."

"Don't you say so to Mary, or she will be fierce."

"I wonder whether I shall ever have a wife to stand up for me in that way?" Kate had no answer to make, but she thought that it would be his own fault if he did not have a wife to stand up for him thoroughly. "He has been very lucky in his wife."

"I think he has, Mr. Medicot; but you are moving about, and you ought to lie still. There! I hear the horses; that's the doctor. I do so hope he won't say that anything very bad is the matter." She jumped up from her chair, which was close to his bed, and as she did so just touched his hand with hers. It was involuntary on her part, having come of instinct rather than will, and she withdrew herself instantly. The hand she had touched belonged to the arm that was not hurt, and he put it out after her, and caught her by the sleeve as she was retreating. "Oh, Mr. Medicot, you must not do that; you will hurt yourself if you move in that way." And so she escaped, and left the room, and did not see him again till the doctor had gone from Gangoil.

The bone had been broken simply as other bones are broken; it was now set, and the sufferer was, of course, told that he must rest. He had suggested that he should be taken home, and the Heathcotes had concurred with the doctor in asserting that no proposition could be more absurd. He had intended to eat his Christmas dinner at Gangoil, and he must now pass his entire Christmas there. "The sugar can go on very well for ten days," Harry had said; "I'll go over myself and see about the men, and I'll fetch your mother over." To this, however, Mrs. Heathcote had demurred successfully. "You'll kill yourself, Harry, if you go on like this," she said. Bender, therefore, was sent in the buggy for the old lady, and at last Harry Heathcote consented to go to bed. "My belief is I shall sleep for a week," he said as he turned in. But he didn't begin his sleep quite at once. "I am very glad I went into Maryborough," he said to his wife, rising up from his pillow. "I've sworn an information against Nokes and two of the Brownbies, and the police will be after them this afternoon. They won't



catch Nokes, and they can't convict the other fellows. But it will be something to clear the country of such a fellow, and something also to let them know that detection is possible."

"Do sleep now, dear," she said.

"Yes, I will; I mean to. But look here, Mary; if any of the police should come here, mind you wake me at once. And Mary, look here; do you know I shouldn't be a bit surprised if that fellow was to be making up to Kate." Mrs. Heathcote, with some little inward chuckle at her husband's assumed quickness of apprehension, reminded herself that the same idea had occurred to her some time ago. Mrs. Heathcote gave her husband full credit for more than ordinary intelligence in reference to affairs appertaining to the breeding of sheep and the growing of wool, but she did not think highly of his discernment in such an affair as this. She herself had been much quicker. When she first saw Mr. Medlicot she had felt it a God-send that such a man, with the look of a gentleman, and unmarried, should come into the neighbourhood; and in so feeling her heart had been entirely with her sister. For herself it mattered nothing who came or did not come, or whether a man were a bachelor or possessed of a wife and a dozen children. All that a girl had a right to want was a good husband. She was quite satisfied with her own lot in that respect, but she was anxious enough on behalf of Kate. And when a young man did come, who might make matters so pleasant for them, Harry quarrelled with him because he was a free selector! "A free fiddlestick!" she had once said to Kate,—not, however, communicating to her innocent sister the ambition which was already filling her own bosom. "Harry does take things up so,—as though people weren't to live, some in one way and some in another! As far as I can see, Mr. Medlicot is a very nice fellow." Kate had remarked that he was "all very well," and nothing more had been said. But Mrs. Heathcote, in spite of Harry's aversion, had formed her little project—a project which, if then declared, would have filled Harry with dismay. And now the young aristocrat, as he turned himself in his bed, made the suggestion to his wife as though it were all his own! "I never like to think much of these things beforehand," she said innocently.

"I don't know about thinking," said Harry; "but a girl might do worse. If

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it should come up, don't set yourself against it."

"Kate, of course, will please herself," said Mrs. Heathcote. "Now do lie down and rest yourself."

His rest, however, was not of long duration. As he had himself suggested, two policemen reached Gangoil at about three in the afternoon on their way from Maryborough to Boolabong, in order that they might take Mr. Medlicot's deposition. After Heathcote's departure it had occurred to Sergeant Forrest, of the police,—and the suggestion, having been transferred from the sergeant to the stipendiary magistrate, was now produced with magisterial sanction,—that after all there was no evidence against the Brownbies. They had simply interfered to prevent the burning of the grass on their own run, and who could say that they had committed any crime by doing so? If Medlicot had seen Nokes with a lighted branch in his hand, the matter might be different with him; and therefore Medlicot's deposition was taken. He had sworn that he had seen Nokes drag his lighted torch along the ground; he had also seen other horsemen,—two or three, as he thought,—but could not identify them. Jacko's deposition was also taken as to the man who had been heard and seen in the wool-shed at night. Jacko was ready to swear point blank that the man was Nokes. The policemen suggested that as the night was dark, Jacko might as well allow a shade of doubt to appear, thinking that the shade of doubt would add strength to the evidence. But Jacko was not going to be taught what sort of oath he should swear. "My word," he said. "Didn't I see his leg move? You go away."

Armed with these depositions, the two constables went on to Boolabong in search of Nokes and of Nokes only, much to the chagrin of Harry, who declared that the police would never really bestir themselves in a squatter's cause. "As for Nokes, he'll be out of Queensland by this time to-morrow."

## CHAPTER XI.

### SERGEANT FORREST.

THE Brownbie party returned, after their midnight raid, in great discomfiture to Boolabong. Their leader, Jerry, was burned about his hands and face in a disagreeable and unsightly manner. Joe had hardly made good that character for

"fighting it out to the end," for which he was apt to claim credit. Boscobel was altogether disconcerted by his fall. And Nokes, who had certainly shown no aptitude for the fray, was abused by them all as having caused their retreat by his cowardice; while Sing-Sing, the runaway cook, who knew that he had forfeited his wages at Gangoil, was forced to turn over in his heathenish mind the ill effects of joining the losing side. "You big fool, Bos," he said more than once to his friend the woodsman, who had lured him away from the comforts of Gangoil. "I'll punch your head, John, if you don't hold your row," Boscobel would reply. But Sing-Sing went on with his reproaches, and, before they had reached Boolabong, Boscobel had punched the Chinaman's head.

"You're not coming in here," Jerry said to Nokes, when they reached the yard gate.

"Who wants to come in? I suppose you're not going to send a fellow on without a bit of grub after such a night's work?"

"Give him some bread and meat, Jack, and let him go on. There'll be somebody here after him before long. He can't hurt us, but I don't want people to think that we are so fond of him that we can't do without harbouring him here. Georgie, you'll go too, if you take my advice. That young cur will send the police here as sure as my name is Brownie, and if they once get hold of you, they'll have a great many things to talk to you about." Georgie grumbled when he heard this, but he knew that the advice given him was good, and he did not attempt to enter the house. So Nokes and he vanished away into the bush together, — as such men do vanish, — wandering forth to live as the wild beasts live. It was still a dark night when they went, and the remainder of the party took themselves to their beds.

On the following afternoon they were lying about the house, sometimes sleeping and sometimes waking up to smoke, when the two policemen, who had already been at Gangoil, appeared in the yard. These men were dressed in flat caps, with short blue jackets, hunting breeches, and long black boots, — very unlike any policemen in the old country, and much more picturesque. They leisurely tied their horses up, as though they had been in the habit of making weekly visits to the place, and walked round to the verandah. "Well, Mr. Brownie, and how are

you?" said the sergeant to the old man. The head of the family was gracious, and declared himself to be pretty well, considering all things. He called the sergeant by his name, and asked the men whether they'd take a bit of something to eat. Joe also was courteous, and, after a little delay in getting a key from his brother, brought out the jar of spirits, — which, in the bush, is regarded as the best sign known of thorough good breeding. The sergeant said that he didn't mind if he did; and the other man, of course, followed his officer's example.

So far everything was comfortable, and the constables seemed in no hurry to allude to disagreeable subjects. They condescended to eat a bit of cold meat before they proceeded to business. And at last the matter to be discussed was first introduced by one of the Brownie family. "I suppose you've heard that there was a scrimmage here last night," said Joe. The Brownie party present consisted of the old man, Joe and Jack Brownie, and Boscobel, — Jerry keeping himself in the background because of his disfigurement. The sergeant, as he swallowed his food, acknowledged that he had heard something about it. "And that's what brings you here," continued Joe.

"There ain't nothing wrong here," said old Brownie.

"I hope not, Mr. Brownie," said the sergeant. "I hope not. We haven't got anything against you at any rate." Sergeant Forrest was a graduate of Oxford, the son of an English clergyman, who, having his way to make in the world, had thought that an early fortune would be found in the Colonies. He had come out, had failed, had suffered some very hard things, and now, at the age of thirty-five, enjoyed life thoroughly as a sergeant of the Colonial police.

"You haven't got anything against anybody here I should think?" said Joe.

"If you want to get them as begun it," said Jack, "and them as ought to be took up, you'll go to Gangoil."

"Hold your tongue, Jack," said his brother. "Sergeant Forrest knows where to go better than you can tell him." Then the sergeant asked a string of questions as to the nature of the fight; who had been hurt; and how badly had anybody been hurt; and what other harm had been done? The answers to all these questions were given with a fair amount of truth, — except that the little circumstance of the origin of the fire was

not explained. Both Boscobel and Joe had seen the torch put down, but it could hardly have been expected that they should have been explicit as to such a detail as that. Nor did they mention the names of either their brother George or Nokes.

"And who was there in the matter?" asked the sergeant.

"There was young Heathcote, and a boy he has got there, and the two chaps as he calls boundary-riders, — and Medlicot, the sugar fellow from the Mill, and a chap of Medlicot's I never set eyes on before. They must have expected something to be up, or Heathcote would not have been going about at night with a tribe of men like that."

"And who were your party?"

"Well, there were just ourselves, — four of us, for Georgie was here, and this fellow Boscobel. Georgie never stays long, and he wouldn't be welcome if he did. He turned up just by chance like, — and now he's off again."

"That was all, — eh?"

Of course, they all knew that the sergeant knew that Nokes had been with them. "Well, then, that wasn't all," said old Brownbie. "Bill Nokes was here, — whom Heathcote dismissed ever so long ago. And that Chinese cook of his. He dismissed him too, I suppose. And he dismissed Boscobel here."

"No one can live at Gangoil any time," said Jack. "Everybody knows that. He wants to be lord a'mighty over everything. But he ain't going to be lord a'mighty at Boolabong."

"And he ain't going to burn our grass either," said Joe. "It's like his impudence coming on to our run and burning everything before him. He calls hisself a magistrate, but he's not to do just as he pleases because he's a magistrate. I suppose we can swear against him for lighting our grass, sergeant? There isn't one of us that didn't see him do it."

"And where is Nokes?" asked the sergeant, paying no attention to the application made by Mr. Brownbie, junior, for redress to himself.

"Well," said Joe, "Nokes isn't anywhere about Boolabong."

"He's away with your brother George?"

"I shouldn't wonder," said Joe.

"It's a serious matter lighting a fire, you know," said the sergeant. "A man would have to swing for it."

"Then why isn't young Heathcote to swing?" demanded Jack.

"There is such a thing as intent, you know. When Heathcote lighted the fire, where would the fire have gone if he hadn't kept putting it out as fast as he kept lighting it? On to his own run, — not to yours. And where would the other fire have gone which somebody lit, and which nobody put out, if he hadn't been there to stop it? The less you say against Heathcote the better. So Nokes is off, — is he?"

"He ain't here, anyways," said Joe. "When the row was over we wouldn't let him in. We didn't want him about here."

"I dare say not," said the sergeant. "Now let me go and see the spot where the fight was." So the two policemen, with the two young Brownbies, rode away, leaving Boscobel with the old man.

"He knows everything about it," said old Brownbie.

"If he do," said Boscobel, "it ain't no odds."

"Not a ha'porth of odds," said Jerry, coming out of his hiding place. "Who cares what he knows? A man may do what he pleases on his own run, I suppose."

"He mayn't light a fire as 'll spread," said the old man.

"Bother! Who's to prove what's in a man's mind? If I'd been Nokes I'd have stayed and seen it out. I'd never be driven about the Colony by such a fellow as Heathcote, with all the police in the world to back him."

Sergeant Forrest inspected the ground on which the fire had raged, and the spot on which the men had met; but nothing came of his inspection, and he had not expected that anything would come of it. He could see exactly where the fire had commenced, and could trace the efforts that had been made to stop it. He did not in the least doubt the way in which it had been lit. But he did very much doubt whether a jury could find Nokes guilty even if he could catch Nokes. Jacko's evidence was worth nothing, and Mr. Medlicot might be easily mistaken as to what he had seen at a distance in the middle of the night.

All this happened on Christmas Day. At about nine o'clock the same evening the two constables reappeared at Gangoil, and asked for hospitality for the night. This was a matter of course, and also the reproduction of the Christmas dinner. Mrs. Medlicot was now there, and her son, with his collar bone set, had been allowed to come out on to the verandah.

The house had already been supposed to be full, but room, as a matter of course, was made for Sergeant Forrest and his man. "It's a queer sort of Christmas we've all been having, Mr. Heathcote," said the sergeant, as the remnant of a real English plum-pudding was put between him and his man by Mrs. Growler.

"A little hotter than it is at home, eh?"

"Indeed it is. You must have had it hot last night, sir."

"Very hot, sergeant. We had to work uncommonly hard to do it as well as we did."

"It was not a nice Christmas game, sir, was it?"

"Eh, me!" said Mrs. Medlicot. "There's nae Christmas games or ony games here at all, except just worrying and harrying, like sae many dogs at each other's throats."

"And you think nothing more can be done?" Harry asked.

"I don't think we shall catch the men. When they get out backwards it's very hard to trace them. He's got a horse of his own with him, and he'll be beyond reach of the police by this time tomorrow. Indeed, he's beyond their reach now. However, you'll have got rid of him."

"But there are others as bad as he left behind. I wouldn't trust that fellow Boscobel a yard."

"He won't stir, sir. He belongs to this country, and does not want to leave it. And when a thing has been tried like that and has failed, the fellows don't try it again. They are cowed like by their own failure. I don't think you need fear fire from the Boolabong side again this summer."

After this the Sergeant and his man discreetly allowed themselves to be put to bed in the back cottage. For in truth when they arrived things had come to such a pass at Gangoil that the two additional visitors were hardly welcome. But hospitality in the bush can be stayed by no such considerations as that. Let their employments or enjoyments on hand be what they may, everything must yield to the entertainment of strangers. The two constables were in want of their Christmas dinner, and it was given to them with no grudging hand.

As to Nokes, we may say that he has never since appeared in the neighbourhood of Gangoil, and that none thereabouts ever knew what was his fate. Men, such as he, wander away from one colony

into the next, passing from one station to another, or sleeping on the ground, till they become as desolate and savage as solitary animals. And at last they die in the bush, creeping, we may suppose, into hidden nooks as the beasts do when the hour of death comes on them.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CONCLUSION.

THE constables had started from Gangoil on their way to Boolabong a little after four, and from that time till he was made to get out of bed for his dinner, Harry Heathcote was allowed to sleep. He had richly earned his rest by his work, and he lay motionless, without a sound, in the broad daylight, with his arm under his head, — dreaming, no doubt, of some happy squatting land, in which there were no free-selectors, no fires, no rebellious servants, no floods, no droughts, no wild dogs to worry the lambs, no grass seeds to get into the fleeces, and in which the price of wool stood steady at two shillings and sixpence a pound. His wife from time to time came into the room, shading the light from his eyes, protecting him from the flies, and administering in her soft way to what she thought might be his comforts. His sleep was of the kind which no light, — nor even flies, — can interrupt. Once or twice she stooped down and kissed his brow, but he was altogether unconscious of her caress.

During this time old Mrs. Medlicot arrived, but her coming did not awake the sleeper, though it was by no means made in silence. The old woman sobbed and cried over her son, at the same time expressing her thankfulness that he should have turned up in the forest so exactly at the proper moment, — evidently taking part in the conviction that her Gíles had saved Gangoil, and all its sheep. And then there were all the necessary arrangements to be made for the night, in accordance with which almost everybody had to give up his or her bed and sleep somewhere else. But nothing disturbed Harry. For the present he was allowed to occupy his own room, and he enjoyed the privilege.

Kate Daly during this time was much disturbed in mind. The reader may remember, — Kate at any rate remembered well, — that just as the doctor had arrived to set his broken bone, Mr. Medlicot, disabled as he was, had attempted to take her by the arm. He had certainly chosen an odd time for a declaration of

love, just the moment in which he ought to have been preparing himself for the manipulation of his fractured limb, — but unless he had meant a declaration of love, surely he would not have seized her by the arm. It was a matter to her of great moment. Oh, — of what vital importance! The English girl living in a town, — or even in what we call the country, — has no need to think of any special man till some special man thinks of her. Men are fairly plentiful, and if one man does not come, another will. And there have probably been men coming and going in some sort since the girl left her schoolroom and became a young lady. But in the bush the thing is very different. It may be that there is no young man available within fifty miles, — no possible lover or future husband, unless Heaven should interfere almost with a miracle. To those to whom lovers are as plentiful as blackberries it may seem indelicate to surmise that the thought of such a want should ever enter a girl's head. I doubt whether the defined idea of any want had ever entered poor Kate's head. But now that the possible love was there, — not only possible but very probable, — and so eligible in many respects, living so close, with a house over his head and a good business; — and then so handsome and, as Kate thought, so complete a gentleman! Of course she turned it much in her mind. She was very happy with Harry Heathcote. There never was a brother-in-law so good! But after all what is a brother-in-law, though he be the very best? Kate had already begun to fancy that a house of her own and a husband of her own would be essential to her happiness. But then a man cannot be expected to make an offer with a broken collar-bone; — certainly cannot do so just when the doctor has arrived to set the bone.

Late on in the day, when the doctor had gone and Medlicot was according to instructions sitting out on the verandah, in an arm-chair, and his mother was with him, and while Harry was sleeping as though he never meant to be awake again, Kate managed to say a few words to her sister. It will be understood that the ladies' hands were by no means empty. The Christmas dinner was in course of preparation, and Sing-Sing, that villainous Chinese cook, had absconded. Mrs. Growler, no doubt, did her best; but Mrs. Growler was old and slow, and the house was full of guests. It was by no means an idle time, but still Kate found

an opportunity to say a word to her sister in the kitchen.

"What do you think of him, Mary?"

To the married sister "him" would naturally mean Harry Heathcote, of whom as he lay asleep the young wife thought that he was the very perfection of patriarchal pastoral manliness; but she knew enough of human nature to be aware that the "him" of the moment to her sister was no longer her own husband. "I think he has got his arm broken fighting for Harry, and that we are bound to do the best we can for him."

"Oh, yes; — that's of course. I'm sure Harry will feel that. He used, you know, to — to — that is, not just to like him because he is a free-selector."

"They'll drop all that now. Of course they could not be expected to know each other at the first starting. I shouldn't wonder if they became regular friends."

"That would be nice! After all though you may be so happy at home it is better to have something like a neighbour. Don't you think so?"

"It depends on who the neighbours are. I don't care much for the Brown-bies."

"They are quite different, Mary."

"I like the Medlicots very much."

"I consider he's quite a gentleman," said Kate.

"Of course he's a gentleman. Look here, Kate. I shall be ready to welcome Mr. Medlicot as a brother-in-law if things should turn out that way."

"I don't mean that, Mary."

"Did you not? Well; — you can mean it if you please, as far as I am concerned. Has he said anything to you, dear?"

"No."

"Not a word?"

"I don't know what you call a word: — not a word of that kind."

"I thought, perhaps —"

"I think he meant it once, — this morning."

"I dare say he meant it. And if he meant it this morning, he won't have forgotten his meaning to-morrow."

"There's no reason why he should mean it, you know."

"None in the least, Kate; — is there?"

"Now you're laughing at me, Mary. I never used to laugh at you when Harry was coming. I was so glad, and I did everything I could."

"Yes, you went away and left us in the Botanical Gardens. I remember. But, you see, there are no Botanical Gardens



here; and the poor man couldn't walk about if there were."

"I wonder what Harry would say, if it were to be so."

"Of course he'd be glad;—for your sake."

"But he does so despise free-selectors! And then he used to think that Mr. Medlicot was quite as bad as the Brownbies. I wouldn't marry any one to be despised by you and Harry."

"That's all gone by, my dear," said the wife, feeling that she had to apologize for her husband's prejudices. "Of course one has to find out what people are before one takes them to one's bosom. Mr. Medlicot has acted in the most friendly way about these fires, and I'm sure Harry will never despise him any more."

"He couldn't have done more for a real brother than have his arm broken."

"But you must remember one thing, Kate. Mr. Medlicot is very nice, and like a gentleman, and all that. But you never can be quite certain about any man till he speaks out, plainly. Don't set your heart upon him till you are quite sure that he has set his upon you."

"Oh, no," said Kate,—"giving her maidenly assurance when it was so much too late! Just at this moment Mrs. Growler came into the kitchen, and Kate's promises, and her sister's cautions, were for the moment silenced."

"How we're to manage to get the dinner on the table, I for one don't know at all," said Mrs. Growler. "There's Mr. Bates 'll be here; that will be six of 'em; and that Mr. Medlicot will want somebody to do everything for him, because he's been and got himself smashed. And there's the old lady has just come out from home and is as particular as anything. And Mr. Harry himself never thinks of things at all. One pair of hands, and them very old, can't do everything for everybody." All of which was very well understood to mean nothing at all.

Household deficiencies,—and, indeed, all deficiencies,—are considerable or insignificant in accordance with the aspirations of those concerned. When a man has a regiment of servants in his dining-room, with beautifully cut glass, a forest of flowers, and an iceberg in the middle of his table if the weather be hot, his guests will think themselves ill-used and badly fed if aught in the banquet be astray. There must not be a rose-leaf ruffled; a failure in the attendance, a falling-off in a dish, or a fault in the wine is a crime. But the same guests

shall be merry as the evening is long with a leg of mutton and whisky toddy, and will change their own plates, and clear their own table, and think nothing wrong,—if, from the beginning, such has been the intention of the giver of the feast. In spite of Mrs. Growler's prognostications, though the cook had absconded, and the chief guest of the occasion could not cut up his own meat, that Christmas dinner at Gangoil was eaten with great satisfaction.

Harry had been so far triumphant. He had stopped the fire that was intended to ruin him, he had beaten off his enemies on their own ground, and he was no longer oppressed by that sense of desolation which had almost overpowered him. "We'll give one toast, Mrs. Medlicot," he said, when Mrs. Growler and Kate between them had taken away the relics of the plum-pudding. "Our friends at home!" The poor lady drank the toast with a sob—"That's vera weel for you, Mr. Heathcote. You're young and will win your way hame, and see auld freends again, nae doubt; but I'll never see aye of them mair, except those I have here." Nevertheless the old lady ate her dinner, and drank her toddy, and made much of the occasion, going in and out to her son upon the verandah.

Soon after dinner, Heathcote, as was his wont, strayed out with his prime minister, Bates, to consult on the dangers which might be supposed still to threaten his kingdom, and Mrs. Heathcote, with her youngest boy in her lap, sat talking to Mrs. Medlicot in the parlour. Such was not her custom in weather such as this. Kate had been sent out on to the verandah, with special commands to attend to the wants of the sufferer, and Mrs. Heathcote would have followed her had she not remembered her sister's appeal, "I did everything I could for you." In those happy days Kate had been very good, and certainly deserved requital for her services. And, therefore, when the men had gone out, Mrs. Heathcote with her guest remained in the warm room, and went so far as to suggest that at that period of the day the room was preferable to the verandah. Poor Mrs. Medlicot was new to the ways of the bush, and fell into the trap;—and thus Kate Daly was left alone with her wounded hero.

When told to take him out his glass of wine, and when conscious that no one followed her, she felt herself to have been guilty of some great sin, and was almost

tempted to escape. She had asked her sister for help;—and this was the help that was forthcoming, help so palpable, so manifest, as to be almost indelicate! Would he think that plans were being made to catch him,—now that he was a captive and impotent? The thought that it was possible that such an idea might occur to him was terrible to her. She would rather lose him altogether than feel the stain of such a suggestion on her own conscience. She put the glass of wine down on the little table by his side, and then attempted to withdraw. "Stay a moment with me," he said. "Where are they all?"

"Mary and your mother are inside. Harry and Mr. Bates have gone across to look at the horses."

"I almost feel as though I could walk too."

"You must not think of it yet, Mr. Medlicot. It seems almost a wonder that you shouldn't have to be in bed, and you with your collar-bone broken only last night. I don't know how you can bear it as you do."

"I shall be so glad I broke it, if one thing will come about."

"What thing?" asked Kate, blushing.

"Kate,—may I call you Kate?"

"I don't know," she said.

"You know I love you,—do you not? You must know it. Dearest Kate, can you love me and be my wife?" His left arm was bound up, and was in a sling, but he put out his right hand to take hers,—if she would give it to him. Kate Daly had never had a lover before, and felt the occasion to be trying. She had no doubt about the matter. If it were only proper for her to declare herself, she could swear with a safe conscience that she loved him better than all the world. "Put your hand here, Kate," he said. As the request was not exactly for the gift of her hand, she placed it in his. "May I keep it now?" She could only whisper something which was quite inaudible, even to him. "I shall keep it and think that you are my all own. Stoop down, Kate, and kiss me if you love me." She hesitated for a moment, trying to collect her thoughts. She did love him and was his own; still to stoop and kiss a man, who,—if such a thing were to be allowed at all,—ought, certainly, to kiss her! She did not think she could do that. But then she was bound to protect him, wounded and broken as he was, from his own imprudence; and if she did not stoop to him, he would rise to her. She was still

in doubt, still standing with her hand in his, half bending over him, but yet half resisting as she bent, when, all suddenly, Harry Heathcote was on the verandah followed by the two policemen, who had just returned from Boolabong. She was sure that Harry had seen her,—and was by no means sure that she had been quick enough in escaping from her lover's hand to have been unnoticed by the policemen also. She fled away as though guilty, and could hardly recover herself sufficiently to assist Mrs. Growler in producing the additional dinner which was required.

The two men were quickly sent to their rest, as has been told before; and Harry, who had in truth seen how close to his friend his sister-in-law had been standing, would, had it been possible, have restored the lovers to their old positions; but they were all now on the verandah, and it was impossible. Kate hung back, half in and half out of the sitting-room, and old Mrs. Medlicot had seated herself close to her son. Harry was lying at full length on a rug, and his wife was sitting over him. Then Giles Medlicot, who was not quite contented with the present condition of affairs, made a little speech. "Mrs. Heathcote," he said, "I have asked your sister to marry me."

"Dearie me, Giles," said Mrs. Medlicot.

Kate remained no longer half in and half out of the parlor, but retreated altogether and hid herself. Harry turned himself over on the rug, and looked up at his wife, claiming infinite credit in that he had foreseen that such a thing might happen. "And what answer has she given you?" said Mrs. Heathcote.

"She hasn't given me any answer yet. I wonder what you and Heathcote would say about it."

"What Kate has to say is much more important," replied the discreet sister.

"I should like it of all things," said Harry, jumping up. "It's always best to be open about these things. When you first came here, I didn't like you. You took a bit of my river frontage,—not that it does me any great harm; and then I was angry about that scoundrel Nokes."

"I was wrong about Nokes," said Medlicot, "and have, therefore, had my collar-bone broken. As to the land you'll forgive my having it if Kate will come and live there."

"By George! I should think so. Kate, why don't you come out? Come along,

my girl. Medlicot has spoken out openly, and you should answer him in the same fashion." So saying he dragged her forth, and, I fear, as far as she was concerned, something of the sweetness of her courtship was lost by the publicity with which she was forced to confess her love. "Will you go, Kate, and make sugar down at the Mill? I have often thought how bad it would be for Mary and me when you were taken away; but we shan't mind it so much if we know that you are to be near us."

"Speak to him, Kate," said Mrs. Heathcote, with her arm round her sister's waist.

"I think she's minded to have him," said Mrs. Medlicot.

"Tell me, Kate,—shall it be so?" pleaded the lover.

She came up to him, and leaned over him, and whispered one word which nobody else heard. But they all knew what the word was. And before they separated for the night, she was left alone with him, and he got the kiss for which he was asking when the policemen interrupted them.

"That's what I call a happy Christmas," said Harry, as the party finally parted for the night.

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From The Economist.

#### HOW FAR HAVE OUR WORKING CLASSES BENEFITED BY THE INCREASE OF OUR WEALTH?

IN the last *Fortnightly* Mr. Fawcett raised, perhaps, the most interesting economical question of the present day. He thinks that, notwithstanding the immense increase in our national wealth our labouring classes are little, if at all, better off than they were twenty years ago, or that, as he more accurately expresses it, "in this period the remuneration of labour has scarcely advanced at all." Professor Cairnes also has given an opinion in the *Daily News* that, whether or not the remuneration of labour has absolutely advanced, at any rate it has not advanced proportionately. Scarcely any similar question is more important than how far on this point these two eminent authorities are correct.

At the outset we should be inclined to reply by another question. We should be inclined to ask Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Cairnes if they think that the profits of capital have augmented during the same

period? They tell us that a working man does not now obtain more, or at any rate not much more, for a day's work than he did 20 years ago, and we should like to hear whether they think that the capitalist—taking one trade with another—receives more now for every 100*l.* of capital than he did then? There is no evidence whatever that the capitalist receives more per cent. on the average than he used to do. On the contrary, we are rather inclined to think that he receives a little less. Is there in that case anything unreasonable or anything unfair in the labourer's receiving little if anything more? As far as we understand what has happened it is this:—an enormous saving has been made of late years in the country; that saving has been employed at nearly, though not perhaps quite the same per centage of profit as the previously existing capital; the aggregate income of the class of capitalists is far more than it used to be, because they own so much more capital. The increase of income is the consequence of their frugality as a class and the recompense of it. But the capitalist who has not been frugal, who has not accumulated, who possesses only the same capital which he had twenty years ago, receives no larger income now than then. Why then should a working man who has not been frugal, who has not accumulated—who has only his day's labour, just as he had twenty years ago—why should he receive anything more?

Whether the real wages of labour have increased or not is a very difficult question of fact. In order to determine it we ought to know with some approach to precision what were the money wages of the labouring classes twenty years ago, what they are now; what the money so received would purchase twenty years ago, and what the money similarly received will purchase now. Any doubt on any of these questions would be fatal to the certainty of an opinion, for the comparative comfort of the labourer at the two dates is the object of inquiry, and that comfort can only be ascertained by answering all four.

Unfortunately, no one of the four can be answered with much approach to accuracy. The easiest at first sight would seem to be the second—what are the money wages paid at present; but as we well know, it is very difficult, or rather it is impossible, to answer this question even by a rough approximation. In the statistical investigation of the prices of labour we cannot pursue the method

which is the easiest and best in the investigation of most prices. In dealing with most commodities we need only consider a comparatively small number of leading bargains. The quoted price say of cotton or woollen goods is the price of wholesale transactions—the price at which the manufacturer sells to the intermediate dealer, the Manchester warehouse keeper, as he is called, who in his turn sells to the retail shopkeeper in many small amounts what he himself bought in a single large one. In statistics we can discover, with some kind of accuracy, the wholesale price, and we assume that on the average the retail price bears a fixed proportion to it. But in the market for labour there are no wholesale bargains; it is only under slavery that intermediate dealers buy labour wholesale in order to resell it retail. Each bargain for labour is a bargain of the ultimate dealer; each capitalist has to purchase the labour which he requires, not from an intermediate distributor of labour, but from the labourer himself. In consequence there are no wholesale prices; there are no large bargains where it is easy to determine the price; there are only retail bargains which are infinite in number, and the prices of which it is impossible to set down in tables. In particular cases no doubt valuable statistics may be collected, but upon the whole the problem is the most difficult in statistics, and defies direct solution.

The prices of the commodities on which the labourers spend their wages, though less difficult, are also not at all easy to determine and compare. The finance of poor families is a difficult finance. A great number of articles, we know, are bought, and in small quantities. But it is difficult to learn the qualities or the precise amounts. We can, without much difficulty, learn the wholesale prices say of sugar or meat at particular times, and can compare the changes, but to infer the effect upon the family of a labourer is most difficult. We can scarcely learn the quantities of each which they consume, nor, when the variations in the price of the different sorts have been unequal, how much of the labourers' consumption is of the sort which has changed most, or of that which has changed least. We do not think therefore that any exact or certain opinion can be formed as to the comparative comfort of the labourer now and twenty years ago. All which can be done is to collect some facts which yield presumptive evidence.

First, the consumption of all the articles which the labourer buys, of which we have any certain knowledge, increases faster than the population increases. The following table shows this:—

CONSUMPTION OF Undermentioned Articles per head of population in 1852 and 1872, compared.

	1872.	1852.	Amt. Per Ct.	Inc.
Cocoa . . . lbs.	0'24	0'12	0'12	100'0
Imported spirits gals.	0'29	0'17	0'12	90'6
Sugar . . . lbs.	47'37	29'11	18'26	62'9
Tea . . . lbs.	4'01	1'98	2'03	102'5
Tobacco . . lbs.	1'37	1'02	0'35	34'3
Malt . . . bush.	1'93	1'24*	0'69	55'6
British spirits gals.	0'86	0'79*	0'07	8'9
Coffee . . . lbs.	0'98	1'26	0'28	22'2

Now the evidence of this table is certainly not conclusive. It may be that the rest of the population—the part above the labouring classes—consume much more of these articles than they did, and that this causes the rise per head over the whole. But this is most unlikely. These articles approximate to necessities; they are the most elementary sort of comforts, and almost indispensable. The labouring classes are almost always the principal consumers of them. If the income of the higher classes augments, they spend most of the increase on comforts less elementary; a large addition to the consumption of articles of which every one requires some amount, but of which no one wants very much, presumably shows that the most numerous class is augmenting in comfort.

It is, too, matter of common observation that one large class of labourers—domestic servants, male and female—have benefited of late years in two ways:—First, their wages are higher; this is a matter so much brought home to common persons that it may be accepted on the general testimony of society; secondly, what is even more certain and obvious, the provision made for them and the amount of personal comfort they enjoy have also augmented. And domestic servants are merely one part of the working classes, not more favourably situated than the rest; in one respect, indeed, they are less favourably situated, for they cannot combine to raise their wages. If, therefore, their wages and comforts have risen, presumably those of the rest of the working classes have risen too. If this were not so, if the condition of the rest of the working classes was improving less rapidly than

\* In these cases the figures for 1855 are taken, the "Statistical Abstract" not containing data to show the consumption of malt and home spirits prior to that year.

that of domestic servants, the places of the latter would be at a premium, and there would be a large increase of applications for them. But it is well known that the very reverse is true, and that it is now not less but more difficult to get servants of fair quality than formerly.

We draw a similar inference from the state of the revenue. Not only are the branches of it which depend upon consumption increasing rapidly, but they are also becoming more stable. The many predictions which have been recently made—some of our own as well as others—that the prosperity of the revenue was precarious, and might be only temporary, have, in consequence, proved more or less false. That prosperity seems to rest on a broader basis than formerly. A greater number of persons consume the tax-paying articles, and a greater catastrophe is required to impair their consumption than that of the smaller number who consumed them formerly. The lesson of the many recent changes in our revenue is the same. We have heard it said that you may take what you like off the Customs, but they will always yield 21,000,000*l.* The consuming power of the country is divided among so many persons that a number of small additions to the consumption of each is enough to raise a vast sum.

These presumptive arguments seem to us to be exceedingly strong, and we should certainly rely upon them in preference to any fragmentary figures. If a complete account of the money wages could be obtained, and also a complete account of their expenditure, or even good approximations to them, the result would be far better than any presumptive arguments. But as such accounts cannot be obtained, nor anything like them, we must use the best substitutes; and very probable arguments from certain and general facts are much better than necessary inferences from scanty and dubious ones.

There are several other considerations which it is very important to remember, so complicated is the subject. First, that "labour" is an ambiguous expression—at least often a misleading one; the day's labour—even the unskilled labour—of one man is not as valuable, does not produce as much work, as the labour of another. Indeed, as we have before explained, it was found by Mr. Brassey, in his contracts for railway construction in various countries, that "cheap labour" and "dear labour" come much

to the same thing—that the man who worked cheapest did least, and that he who worked dearest did most, so that the final result of the labour of the two was almost identical. In the prices of agricultural labour at the present day it would be a great mistake to put down as equal the day's hire of a Dorsetshire labourer and that of a Lincolnshire one. It would be like having a general price for steam engines, not specifying the horse-power. The Lincolnshire man is far the more efficient animal of the two. In the same way, in contrasting the prices of labour at past periods with its price now, we must carefully bear in mind that the increase of its nominal price may arise from a corresponding increase in its efficiency, or it may not—it may either be an increased remuneration for doing more, or an increased remuneration for doing only the same. To the capitalist this distinction is vital. If he pays more for the same work he is so much the more out of pocket; but if he only pays the same for the same work he does not care whether it takes more men or less, more hours or fewer. It does not affect the money payment or the real equivalent.

Secondly, the profits in many trades, especially of the great manufacturing ones, rise and fall much oftener than the rate of wages; otherwise, indeed, the labourers in these trades would starve. In them there is often, for considerable periods, no profit at all, or next to none. If wages were to fall equally the labourer would have to work for nothing, or something near it. As we all know, this is impossible. The capitalist makes an advance of wages in times of adversity when he is making nothing, or very little, and he expects to be recouped in times of prosperity; in consequence, the rate of profit in such trades (and to a less extent in others) would vary very much more than that of wages, for wages in bad times never fall to zero, and the profits of good times include the compensation for paying wages when profits were actually at zero. Both the minimum and the maximum remuneration of the capitalist are therefore much more variable than that of the labourer.

For popular purposes this is very important, and very apt to be forgotten. From causes which we have often explained all trades and branches of commerce tend to be good and bad together. And therefore the profits of all capitalists are far more at some times than others. Every one knows this, and every one



sees it; and it is natural to ask, has the other factor in production fared equally well—has the labourer been benefited as much as the capitalist? But, when we examine the matter, it would be most unfair that he should be equally benefited by the good times, because he did not bear an equal share of the evil of the bad times.

Thirdly, it must be remembered that an increase in the capital of a country by no means necessarily involves an increased demand for labour. This depends on the form in which the capital exists. If there is a million more in the farming trade, and a large part of it is devoted to the payment of wages, this will enhance the demand for labour, and will tend to increase the remuneration of the labourer. But a million's worth more of machines has no similar tendency. They simply co-operate with the labourer; they do not increase his remuneration. Railways, in like manner, and other permanent works once made, do not increase the demand for labour—at least not largely, and only incidentally. They do not promote it as agriculture, say, promotes it, in which an annual labour produces an annual crop. They are simply locomotive machines of a particular kind; they transfer the produce of labour from one place to another; they are, in the technical sense, co-operative, not remunerative, capital. All the part, therefore, of the wealth of England which is fixed in railways, in canals, and in machines, only in a slight degree augments the demand for labour, and can in no degree be made to remunerate it. Mr. Fawcett indeed seems, on the other hand, to think that the employment of machinery has absolutely lessened the demand for English labour; and if, on the whole, it had displaced labour such would have been the effect. But we do not believe that, on the whole, machinery of late years has displaced labour; it has rendered labour vastly more efficient; made the commodities to which it was applied infinitely cheaper; it has caused fifty things to be made where only one was made before, but the number of people employed in all the principal industries is, we believe, greater *with* the new machinery than it was before it came into use, or than it would have been without it. The popular notion is still more false that every accumulation of capital benefits labour. On the contrary, it only benefits labour when it is used in purchasing and remunerating it.

Fourthly, it might seem at first sight, from what has just been said, that machinery must, after all, benefit labourers. It must make things that they want cheap; although, it will be said, the money wages of labour may not be augmented by machinery, as of course they are not, yet the *real* wages of labour—the amount of the commodities which the labourer desires that he is able to obtain for the money he receives—must be greater. And so in some cases it is. The clothing of labourers, for example, has been vastly cheapened by machinery; if all the other things they consume had been equally cheapened their condition would have been immensely benefited. But, unfortunately, this is not so; in the production of most of the articles desired and consumed by labourers machinery works at a disadvantage; its effect is much less than usual; it cheapens them only a little; it only prevents them from getting dear. In no trade has machinery been more applied of late years than in the corn trade; the amount of capital employed in ships and railways that convey corn is augmenting with surpassing rapidity; yet it does not correspondingly diminish the price. The corn that could be most easily brought to market was brought first; that which remained is, as a rule, produced less easily—it comes from a greater distance or from a poorer soil. In such occupations machinery has a constantly augmenting difficulty with which to struggle; it is much if it keeps the price steady, or if it lowers it only a little. To meat and butter, and other articles of food which the labourer would like to have, machinery can hardly be applied at all. And therefore, the result is, not only that capital employed in machinery does not benefit the labourer as it would have benefited him if it had been employed in buying his labour, which it is obvious it does not, but also that it does not benefit him as it would at first seem likely to do, or as it would do if nature had made him desire different articles. In fact, it only enables a larger population to have food at the same or at a slightly reduced cost; it does not, as it does in clothing, enable that larger population to obtain what they want at a price constantly and steadily diminishing.

On the whole, therefore, when all these considerations are collected and weighed, the probable conclusion is that the rate of wages per diem has risen, so as to enable the working classes to have more per head of most things they want; that

this is the more remarkable because, as far as we know, the rate of profit per cent. on capital has not increased; that the class of capitalists are immensely richer because there is so much more capital in the country; that the income naturally belongs to them because they saved it, and not to working men or others who did not save it; that this immense accumulation of their capital has not benefited the labourer by equally raising money wages, because it has taken largely the form of machinery, which has no such effect; and that it has not benefited them by cheapening all the articles they consume, because the most important of these articles have a natural tendency to augment in price, and machinery and capital are therefore impeded and counteracted. There is no reason why the labourer should be exceedingly benefited, even by the greatest increase of wealth, when that wealth was not saved by him, and only in a minor degree creates a demand for him.

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From The Economist.

#### THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BECOMING A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

DURING the last fortnight there has been more discussion about going into Parliament than about anything else, and there is a good deal of difference of opinion about it. On the one hand, the great majority, holding the traditional opinion, say that a seat in Parliament is the natural reward of ability, and the best thing that can happen to any Englishman; on the other hand, an intellectual minority, mainly though not wholly to be found in London, say that Parliament is mostly composed of dull, rich men, that it is fit for such and only such, that an intellectual man would only waste his mind there, that he should keep to his own pursuits — to literature, or science, or philosophy — and leave Parliament to others. Let us try and see what is the truth of this matter; what a man gains and what he loses.

There is no doubt that the traditional idea rests upon an abolished fact. It is thought that going into Parliament is a good way of making money. And it is true that sixty years ago, or still more a hundred, it was possible for a young man who started with very small means, but who had available brains, and who played

his game keenly, to arrive at considerable wealth. There were then many sinecure places of fair amount which could be combined together till they came to a very good income indeed, and which could be settled in remainder and reversion so as to make a comfortable provision for children. The chance of obtaining these places was always most uncertain, and the career was very precarious — it was never considered a reliable calling by sound people. Still there was such a career, and we could run over the names of those who made money in it. But now there is no longer any such career. The sinecure places upon which it was based have been abolished. If a man of ability wishes to make money he had better go anywhere else than into Parliament, for there is much more to be spent than made there.

The real gains at the present, as they affect most men, are three. First, a man gains far more social standing, as it is called, by going into Parliament than he can gain in any other way. "I wrote books," said a politician of the last generation, "and I was nobody; I made speeches and I was nobody; I got into Parliament and I was somebody." There is a foolish way of depreciating such feelings; they are called in literature "low and snobbish;" but they are very powerful and deep-seated notwithstanding. Mankind are not solitary theorists; they are practical and social beings, dependent for much of their happiness on the respect and goodwill of one another. The wish "to have worship from those with whom you sit at meat" is an inseparable part of our present human nature. It is possible to purify and elevate it; it is not possible to eradicate or annihilate it. As long as English society considers a seat in Parliament a great social prize, a seat there will, by the mass of Englishmen, be looked for and coveted as such. And it is very natural that it should be so regarded as such a prize — it is far more comprehensible to most people than eminence in science or literature. A common person who reads little, has but very little notion what the books of the day are about. He thinks but little of them, and does not much understand them when he does think. But no one can help thinking of Parliament; no one can help knowing, more or less, what is done there, and who are the famous men there. To take part in the government of the country — to be a member of the Assembly, which rules the country — is a dis-

tion much more intelligible to most people than to have written a book or made a discovery in optics; and it is also a more indisputable distinction. There are often two opinions about science, and almost always two about literature. Discoveries are said to be not discoveries but mistakes; books not to be good writing, for which the author should be admired, but bad, for which he should be despised. But about Parliament there is no doubt at all; whether a man is or is not a member of the House of Commons is a plain matter of fact. It is an indisputable mark of comprehensible merit, while books and scientific theories are only disputable claims to an incomprehensible one.

The fact that the most influential part of the Cabinet — of the Board of National Directors, as we may call it — is taken from the House of Commons, raises the character of the whole. To be a member of that board is the greatest distinction among common Englishmen. Every one respects the few members of that small body which decides whether there shall be peace or war; what shall be and what shall not be our home policy. The House out of which they are chosen shares the distinction. A member of Parliament is, at any rate, eligible for the Cabinet, while no one else is eligible. And the Cabinet and the whole Government of England are still so closely connected with the House of Lords and the Crown, that even a distant connection with them — the merely being in Parliament — is fondly respected by simple people because it seems to imply a vicinity to the aristocracy and an approximation to the Throne.

Secondly, a member of Parliament has the means of acquiring much valuable knowledge which it is difficult to learn in other ways at all, and which can in no other way be learnt so easily and perfectly. The working of the great machine of Parliament can be far better investigated by persons in Parliament than by any one else; they have a first-hand knowledge of much which to others is only matter of report; they have a just confidence in the use of their knowledge which others have not; they can feel that it is complete, and that they know all about the matter; whereas those who have only second-hand knowledge feel, in this case as in all others, that there may be something of which they have never heard and of which they have no idea. Members of the House see the Parlia-

mentary machine itself; literary people only judge of it, as it were, by plates and description. On the actual working of the machine at any particular time this is particularly important; a careful observer can, by steady comparison, educe certain general rules for which he has solid reasons, and in which he has confidence; but in the application of those rules to a particular case he must always feel uncertainty. There is a vast mass of political knowledge which is at all times most important, and which no reading, no newspapers, can supply them with. Our newspapers are, and are proud that they are, distinguished by an absence of personality; they do not lift the veil of private life; they do not tell the inner weakness of public men or the details of their "habit as they live," and there can be no greater merit in the papers or blessing to the public. An incessant press dealing with real personalities would sicken its readers, and would drive sensitive men from public life. But, nevertheless, personality is a most important element in politics; political business, like all other, is not transacted by machines, but by living and breathing men, of various and generally strong characters, of various and often strong passions. Unless you know something of these passions and these characters you are continually at fault. The knowledge of public men, so freely given by newspapers, is a knowledge of masks rather than realities — of actors, as they seem on the stage, rather than of those actors as they really are. Something may be learned out of Parliament to remedy this, but an able and active member can see, with ease and certainty, five times as much as can be gathered in any way. And this personality, important as it is, is not the only appropriate knowledge of members of Parliament, perhaps not even the most valuable. If they are intelligent, they can tell what is really practicable far better than any one else, for they can better know the feeling of the House of Commons, which is the immediate authority, and of the constituencies, which is the ultimate authority. Each member can see by his own constituency what the ordinary British elector thinks of things, and he has before him daily what the ordinary member of Parliament thinks of them. No other persons can approach him in this, if he uses his advantages well. What *ought* to be done can often be sufficiently seen by persons not in Parliament, but

the final problem of practice, what *can* be done, is not often fully seen except by those who are there.

Lastly, members of Parliament have a certain amount of power; not indeed enough — indeed not of the sort to satisfy men of eager minds and despotic temperament — but still considerable. They can take part in the business of legislation; if they have any sort of real knowledge, and any kind of regular industry, they can easily find work which will be in itself valuable, and which they will be respected for doing by those around them. If they aspire to and obtain office, they have of course much more power. No doubt it is very rarely even then of the sort which the tyrannical disposition, the disposition which most longs for power, most likes. An English statesman can only in very rare cases impose on others original plans of his own. His work is either to co-operate in committee with other men, or to embody in legal form the ideas of other men. Even in administration he has to cope with many obstacles, and has to consult with and consider many other minds. Still this power, even so lessened and so defined, is a sufficient object of a wise ambition. To moderate people it is indeed more desirable than greater and more solitary power; such persons are rarely anxious to impose on others large schemes of their own, and they have usually more confidence in plans which have been assented to and, so to say, verified by several other minds, than those which are solely due to, and have only been considered by, themselves. There is much power to be obtained by an English statesman, and considerable power to be got by going into Parliament, though for the most part it is a power of co-operation and of adaptation, not of exclusive origination or sole despotism.

But these advantages are obtained by members of Parliament at a very high price — first in the lowest kind of price — for, a rare exception or two apart, they have to pay in money, in one way or another, a considerable sum. What with the cost of elections, the cost of making yourself popular in a constituency, the cost of living in London, and the cost of society, a considerable sum annually runs away. Except with men of peculiar gifts, or peculiar circumstances, those who endeavour to lead a Parliamentary life without paying this price in money will probably find that they have spent more than they wish without obtaining the life which they desire. They will have economized

enough to lose them their constituency, but not enough to prevent their having expended more than they meant, and, perhaps, more than they can afford. And besides the price in money, an active member of Parliament has to pay a much heavier one in time and labour. There is no occupation which absorbs men so much as politics — none at least in which there is so little money to be earned. Scarcely any one who has ever been in Parliament and who has lost his seat is happy till he gets back. But the time so spent and the fatigue so incurred are very great. Men disposed to idle can idle in Parliament as well as anywhere else; but then they might just as well be anywhere else. Men who wish to get something special out of Parliament — something which they would not have if they were not in it — will find that they are involved in a vortex of late hours, of long committees, of long listening to others, of long waitings to speak themselves without being able. Neither the instruction given by being in Parliament nor the power are to be obtained at less cost. Nor is this the worst. An influential member of Parliament has not only to pay much money to become such, and to give time and labour, he has also to sacrifice his mind too — at least all the characteristic part of it, that which is original and most his own. And this is in the nature of things. If you want to represent a constituency, you must not go down to them and say, "See, I have all these new ideas, of which you have no notion: these new plans, which you must learn and study — all this new knowledge, of which neither you nor your fathers ever heard." If you hint at anything like this you will be rejected at once. But, on the contrary, you must say what they think only perhaps a little better than they could say it; advocate the schemes they wish advocated; be zealous for the party's tradition which you and they have in common. The cleverer you can be in doing this, the more you can please them with their own thoughts and make them happy with their own inventions, the better they will like you. But (exceptions apart) you must not try to teach them. They want a representative, not a tutor; a man who will vote as they wish, not one who will teach them what they ought to wish for. This is the real cause of the deluge of commonplace that has lately filled the newspapers. In the million election speeches which have been made it may be doubted if there have been five original thoughts; even the best, as



a rule, have only been old tunes admirably played. There is plenty of originality in England if it would pay to be original. But at an election it does not; you would only puzzle your constituency by saying what they do not understand, and offend them by seeming to think that you are wiser than they are. "We never heard of such a thing in all our lives before," they will say, and will think it a sufficient objection to the truth of an idea or the sufficiency of a plan. A man who wants to represent others must be content to seem to be as they are, and it will be better for him if he is as they are. A man who tries

to enter Parliament must be content to utter common thoughts, and to bind himself to the formularies of common creeds, or he will not succeed in his candidature. And to some minds there is no necessity more vexing or more intolerable.

We have made at length this comparison of advantages and disadvantages, because it goes far to explain the composition of the new Parliament. It explains why so many people are so anxious to go into Parliament, and how much of sensible commonplace there appears to be in them, how little of anything higher.

A NEW ENEMY.—I wish to say a few words about an enemy which threatens to lay waste one of Europe's most valued esculents, the potato. For a long time North America has had to contend against two foes, which devoured the early shoots and leaves of the potato, and thus destroyed the hopes of the farmer and gardener. These were beetles belonging to the same family as the Blister-fly, and named *Lytta atrata* (or *vittata*) and *Cantharis viniaria*. They can be kept within bounds; but of late a third beetle has appeared among us which really threatens to drive the potato out of cultivation altogether. It bears the name of the Colorado Potato-beetle (*Doryphora decem-punctata*); and should it once reach the Atlantic coast, and be carried unobserved across the ocean, then—woe to the potato-grower of the old country! A man must witness the myriad legions of this insect, and the ravages of its never-tiring larvæ, in order to form an idea of the terrible danger with which Europe is threatened. For myself, judging from the tenacity of life exhibited both in its larval and perfect condition, I have not a doubt that it will soon overstep the bounds of North America, and make a home for itself in other lands. Its true domicile is in the Rocky Mountains, where it feeds on a species of wild potato, *Solanum rostratum* (or *Caroliniana*). No sooner, however, had the edible potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) been planted by settlers at the foot of these mountains, than *Doryphora* attacked it greedily; the more largely its cultivation extended westward, the faster did its insect foe travel in an easterly direction, and scatter itself over the land. In the year 1850 it was located one hundred miles west of Omaha city, in Nebraska; in 1861 it showed itself in Iowa; in 1865, not only had it begun to devastate Missouri, but it had crossed the Mississippi in Illinois, everywhere leaving behind it flourishing colonies. In 1868 Indiana was visited; in 1870 Ohio and the confines of Canada were reached, also portions of Pennsylvania and New York; and its entrance into Massachu-

setts was notified. During the year 1871 a great army of these beetles covered the river Detroit in Michigan, crossed Lake Erie on floating leaves and similar convenient rafts, and in a very short time took possession of the country between St. Clair and Niagara rivers. Having got thus far, in spite of all efforts to stay their progress, there is every reason to believe that before long we shall hear of them as swarming in the streets of New York and Boston (as they already swarm in the city of St. Louis), and then their passage across the Atlantic is a mere matter of time. Moreover, the beetle in its different stages is so entirely unaffected by the extremes of heat and cold, of wet and dry, which it has met with here, that I have no doubt it will care as little for the changes of climate which occur in the temperate zone of Europe, and, once settled, will quickly become naturalized. The devastations of the Colorado-beetle are all the greater, from the fact of its propagating itself with extraordinary rapidity, several broods following each other in the course of the year. The first batch of infant larvæ appears towards the end of May, or, if the weather be mild, of April. In fact scarcely has the potato plant shown itself above the ground, before the insect, which has been hibernating during the winter, also wakes to life. The female loses no time in depositing from seven hundred to twelve hundred eggs, in clusters of twelve or thirteen, on the underside of a leaf. Within five or six days, according to the state of the weather, the larvæ escape from the egg, and begin their work of devastation, which goes on for some seventeen days, when the little creatures retire below the soil, in order to undergo the pupal condition. After a delay of ten or fourteen days, the perfect insect comes into being, and the business of egg-laying commences anew. In this way, according to recent observations, three broods follow each other; the last, as just stated, wintering below the surface of the ground. No description can do justice to the marvellous voracity of this insect, es-



pecially in its larval state. When once a field of potatoes has been attacked, all hope of a harvest must be given up; in a very few days it is changed into an arid waste—a mere mass of dried-up stalks. Hardwicke's Science Gossip.

**SHERIFFS AND THEIR DUTIES IN THE OLDEN TIME.**—The sheriffs of counties were generally, in ancient times, men of high rank and great power. They had the several counties committed to them respectively by the king at his pleasure, either in custody or at ferm certain. To them the king usually intrusted, together with the counties, his castles and manors lying within their bailiwick. They furnished these castles with ammunition and other necessities, and stocked and improved the manors. They were also for a long period the most considerable accountants to the Crown, a great part of the land revenue passing through their hands. They accounted every year to the king, and their method of account was regular and exact. They were also charged with the performance of many special duties, and among these, a great number and variety of which are cited by Madox in his "History of the Exchequer," we mention the following as interesting perhaps to our readers. By a liberate roll of 36 Henry III., the sheriffs of London were commanded to supply fourpence "per diem" for the maintenance of the King's white bear and his keeper in the Tower of London. By a similar roll of the following year they were ordered to provide a muzzle and an iron chain, and a cord for the same ("unum Musellum et unam Catenam ferream, ad tenendum Ursum illum extra aquam, et unam longam et fortem cordam ad tenendum eundem Ursum piscantem in aqua Thamisiæ") the muzzle and chain for use on land, the cord to hold him when in the water. By another liberate roll of 39 Henry III., they were ordered to build a house in the Tower for the king's elephant, and by yet another of the 40th of the same reign, to provide necessities for the elephant and his keeper. Another royal mandate, addressed to the same sheriffs, bid them disburse out of the ferm of their city, £40. 7s. 6d. for the maintenance of the king's leopard in the Tower and the wages of his keeper, at sixpence a day for the leopard, and three-halfpence a day for the keeper. The Sheriff of Gloucester, by a roll of 26 Henry III., was commanded to cause twenty salmons to be bought and made into pies against the approaching Christmas, and the sheriff of Sussex, the same year was directed to buy brawn and other provisions for the king's table ("X braones, cum capitibus, X pavones, L cuniculos, C perdicēs, et D gallinas"). Orders were issued in the 37th of the same reign to the sheriffs of Wiltshire and Sussex to buy each of them a thousand ells of fine linen

cloth ("mille ulnas Linæ telæ pulchræ et delicatæ"), and to send it to the king's wardrobe before the next Whitsuntide. The sheriff of Southampton was ordered to cause the image of St. Christopher with our Saviour in his arms, and the image of St. Edward the King, to be painted in the Queen's Chapel at Winchester. The sheriff of Kent was ordered, under great pain and forfeiture, to buy one hundred shiploads of grey stone, and to convey the same to Westminster, for the king's works upon the church there ("Memor. 21 H. 3, Rot. 8 a"); and the sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk disbursed thirty be-sants to be offered at St. Edmund's shrine for the king and queen and their children.

Land and Water.

**THE PATRIARCH OF CONSTANTINOPLE.**—The election of the Ecumenical Patriarch was held at Constantinople on the 5th inst. The Porte having returned to the Patriarchate the list of candidates for the office, without making use of its prerogative to accept any one of them, the Mixed Council met again on the day mentioned, at the Great Hall of the Patriarchate, and proceeded to select three from the list of twelve candidates, from which three the body of bishops chooses definitively, according to the existing regulations, the new Patriarch. The three candidates chosen were Monsignor Joachim, formerly Patriarch, by seventy-seven votes; the Bishop of Chalcedon by sixty-four votes; and the Bishop of Heraclia by fifty votes. This long process of voting—which occupied nearly three hours—being over, the body of twenty-three bishops descended to the church of the patriarchate (St. George's), and after the usual prayers of the occasion being read, elected unanimously Monsignor Joachim. The Assembly then returned to the great hall, and drew up the *procès verbal* and signed the Mazbata announcing the election for transmission to the Porte. They then chose a committee, which repaired to Monsignor Joachim's private dwelling, and "in a very touching address" informed the venerable prelate of his election. The unanimity and the brotherly feeling prevailing in the proceedings were, according to the *Levant Herald*, most noticeable; the election of a patriarch presenting generally great differences of opinion and feeling. When the new Patriarch has been received by the Sultan in solemn audience, his Holiness will take up his office and his residence at the patriarchate. In the meantime it speaks well for the Bishop of Chalcedon and the Bishop of Heraclia, who must have been disappointed at the result of the election, that they made no complaint. In fact, the proceedings seem to have been conducted in a manner most creditable to all concerned.